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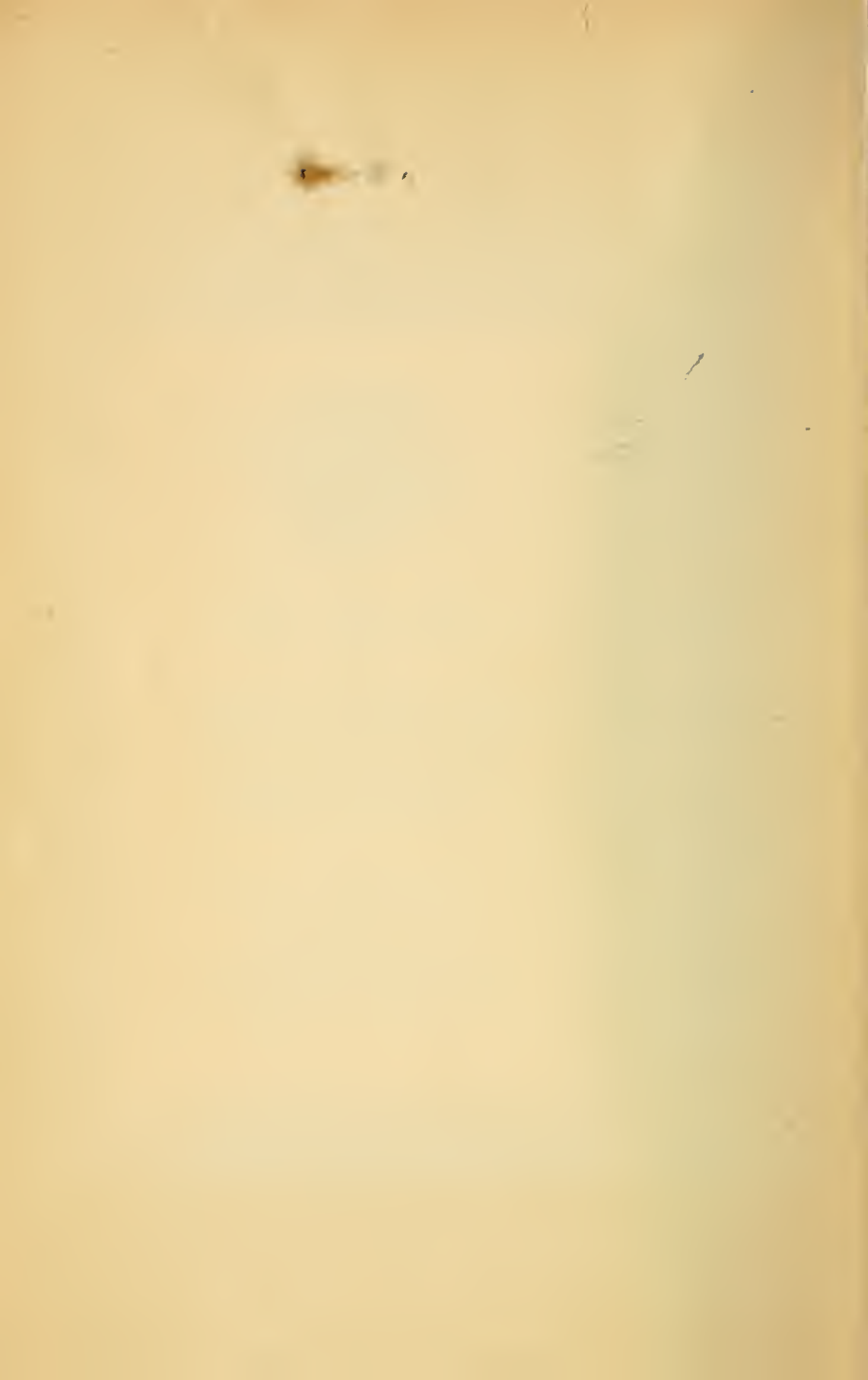
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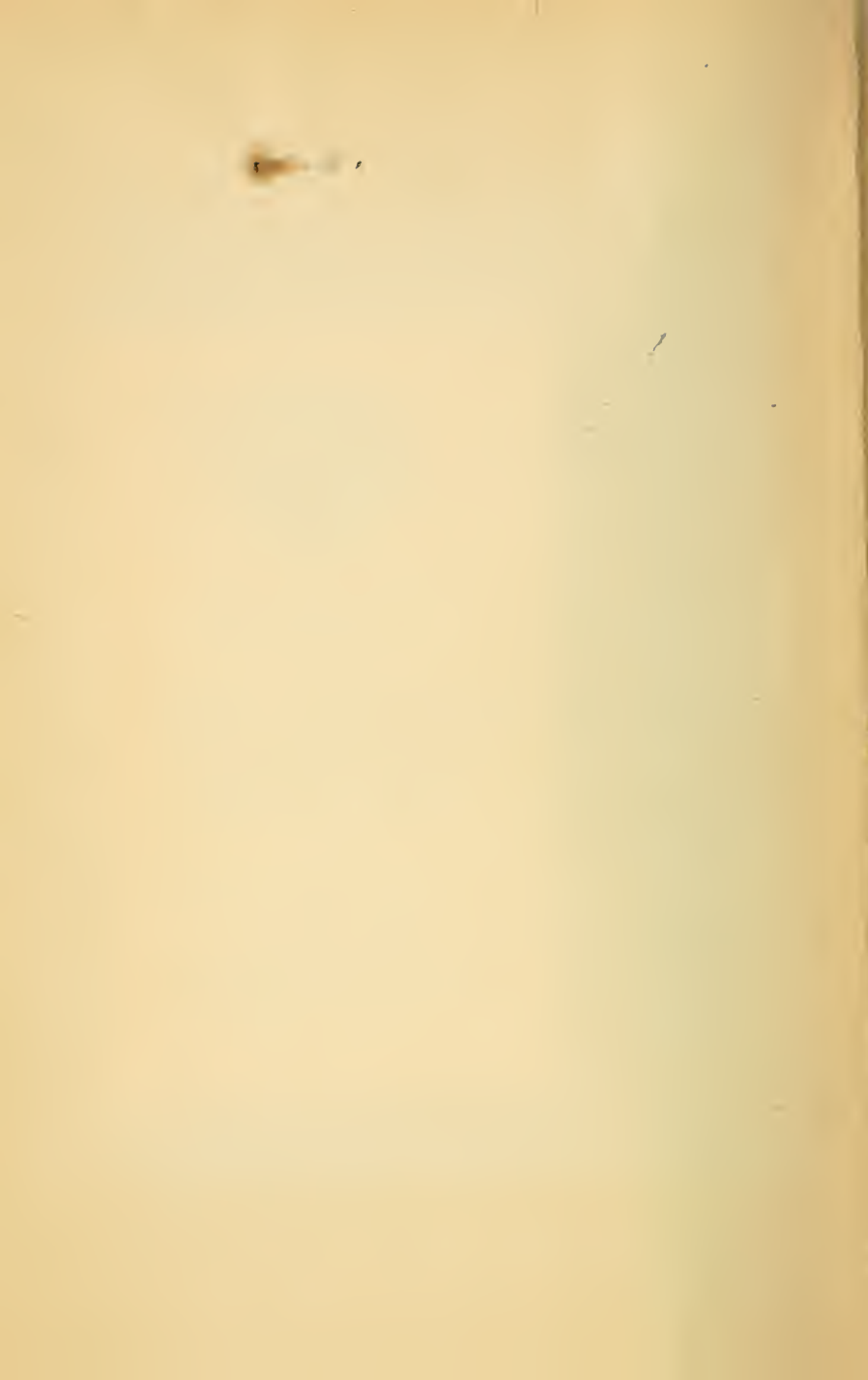
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Frontispiece.]



JOSEPH LANCASTER.

*From the Portrait by John Hazlitt presented to the National Portrait
Gallery by William Sharwood.*

JOSEPH LANCASTER

BY

DAVID SALMON

PRINCIPAL OF SWANSEA TRAINING COLLEGE

AUTHOR OF "THE ART OF TEACHING," "LONGMANS'
SCHOOL GRAMMAR," ETC.

PUBLISHED FOR
THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY

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PREFACE.

JOSEPH LANCASTER and Andrew Bell each sprang from respectable poverty; each found his vocation in teaching; each happened to re-invent a monitorial system; each was extravagantly vain of his achievement; and each thought that he had earned an immortality of fame. But the means which they took for ensuring that future ages should possess full knowledge of the details of their careers differ as widely as their characters and their circumstances.

Bell was the embodiment of caution and prudence; he never took a step which was not calculated to advance him professionally or pecuniarily; from the time that he left College he was in receipt of a fixed income; from the time that he reached India he held so many offices together that he could neither earn nor spend half his revenue; and during his later years the disposal of his wealth was his chief trouble.

Lancaster, on the other hand, was singularly imprudent and improvident; he probably never enjoyed a fixed salary for six months throughout his whole life; and during the last twenty-five years he was often in abject want.

Bell had a secretary employed for a long period in collecting and arranging the materials for his biography; he selected Robert Southey, one of the greatest masters of prose then living, and left him a thousand pounds to be his biographer. The result is a record so tediously minute that few people can ever have had the perseverance to go through its two thousand pages.

Lancaster was as eager as his rival for posthumous glory, but was never in a position to fee an author. He had not much money to spend on preserving his

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life: he had none to spend on preserving his memory. In 1833 he published "An Epitome of the Chief Events and Transactions in the Life of Joseph Lancaster," a book of a hundred odd pages, mostly "padding." This was written in dire distress and was evidently intended to call forth help rather than to set forth facts.

Lancaster died in 1838. Twenty years had elapsed since he had attracted any general notice in America, and twenty-five since he had disappeared from the public gaze in England: hence his death did not, on either side of the Atlantic, excite any curiosity. It must, however, have suggested to the ever-faithful Corston that he ought to do something to perpetuate the name of his friend. Corston was now a very old man, his memory was failing, and the only events which he narrated from personal knowledge had happened more than thirty years before.* The "Brief Sketch of the Life of Joseph Lancaster" which he published in 1840 is therefore not a symmetrical biography, but random recollections swollen into a booklet by the addition of some two dozen of Lancaster's letters. These are very valuable to the student of spiritual experiences, but very disappointing to the searcher for mere mundane facts. Fortunately, Corston's own description is full and clear of three incidents of which we have no other account—the interview with the King, the arrest for debt, and the formation of the first Committee.

In 1845 Henry Dunn wrote for the *Eclectic Review* an article on Lancaster which was afterwards republished (with a subsequent article on Allen). Dunn had been a student at the Borough Road in 1827, when the

* Corston made the acquaintance of Lancaster in the middle of 1804; after 1814 their meetings (if any) must have been very rare: in 1818 they ceased altogether. In his preface, dated June 4th, 1840, Corston says that he is in his 84th year. Either he or Dunn, who says that "he died on the 25th of May, 1843, in the 84th year of his age," is wrong.

traditions of Lancaster were still fresh ; he was appointed Secretary to the British and Foreign School Society in 1830, when Allen was still treasurer ; the minute books and correspondence files of the Society were open to him ; and we must therefore regret that his performance fell so lamentably far below his opportunities. His facts (errors included) are copied from Corston or from Southey ; his original matter consists solely of a letter from Bell to Lancaster not given by Southey, and some details of the American adventures for which "we are indebted to a manuscript communication from Lancaster himself."

Since Dunn's day, Lancaster has occasionally been the subject of an article, but mine is, I believe, the first attempt to make him the subject of a book. My interest in him began when I was a tutor in the Borough Road College, and increased when I became master of a school built on the site of his old school in Belvedere Place. During the last thirty years, whenever, in the course of much miscellaneous reading, I met a reference to him, I noted it. When I had seen everything which Lancaster wrote (except the second edition of the "Improvements" and one pamphlet whose very title I cannot discover); when I had also seen everything which Bell wrote, and nearly all the contributions to the controversy which raged around the two ; and when Mr. Bourne had kindly given me access to the first minute book of the Society, I thought that the time had come for arranging my material into a connected biography.

This being primarily intended for a lecture to an educational society, I confined myself strictly to the life of Lancaster, though well aware that it is but one chapter in a long story. The life of Bell, a comparison of his system with Lancaster's, the gradual development of the monitor into the pupil-teacher, the

evolution of the Training Colleges, the growth of the British and Foreign and of the National Societies, and the part which these Societies played in the establishment of State-aided schools, are other chapters not less important and not less instructive, but they must be left for a more convenient season—or a more competent writer.

DAVID SALMON.

Training College,
Swansea,
26 January, 1904.

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From the Portrait by John Hazlitt presented to the
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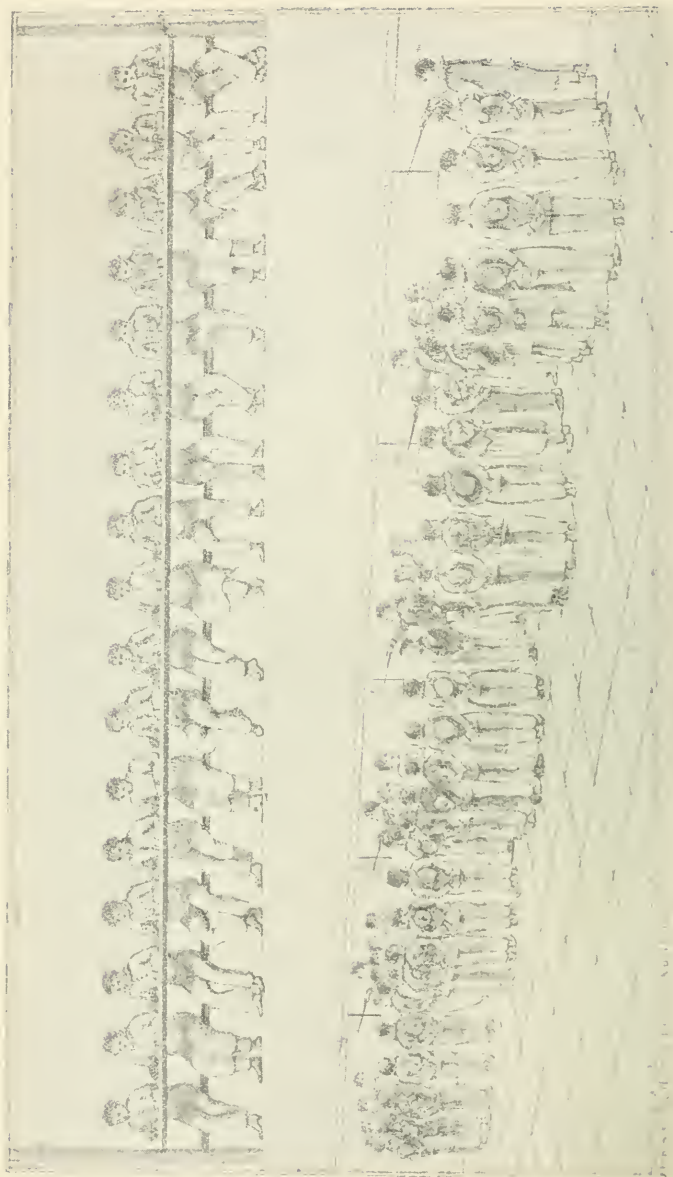
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A MONITORIAL SCHOOL.
Reduced from Hamet.

JOSEPH LANCASTER.

CHAPTER I.

Childhood.

Joseph Lancaster did not directly create the pupil-teacher, the training college, the British and Foreign School Society, or the National Society; he did not directly create the board school, teaching generally the many truths which all the leading denominations of Christians believe; nor the voluntary school, teaching specially the few dogmas which all the leading denominations, except one, disbelieve. But to understand properly the origin of any of these institutions we must go back to him; indeed, the history of our system of public elementary schools begins with him.

In 1902 the smooth and orderly evolution of that system suffered violent interruption in the cataclysm known as the Education Act. From the flood, board and voluntary schools emerged more or less altered. The board school retains its unsectarian character, but has lost its name; the voluntary school retains its name, but has lost the few remaining shreds of its voluntary character. The present, therefore, seems a very fitting time for studying afresh the life of Joseph Lancaster, to whom may be traced the genesis of the old order which is now yielding place to the new.

Lancaster was born on the 25th* of November, 1778, in Kent Street,† Southwark. This street had been described a hundred and fifty years before as "very long and ill-built, chiefly inhabited by broom-men and mumpers," and in the intervening time it had not improved. People would not live in such a street if they

* William Corston, an intimate friend, says that Lancaster was born on the 27th (*Sketch*, p. 1), but he quotes (p. 42) a letter dated "23rd of 11th Mo.," in which Lancaster writes: "The day after to-morrow is my birthday (born 25th of 11th month, 1778)." As Lancaster was a Quaker and Corston was not, the addition in brackets is almost certainly Lancaster's. Any doubt respecting the date is settled by Dr. Joseph Hamel, who was sent to England by the Emperor of Russia in 1813 to study the monitorial plan, and who obtained his information from Corston and Allen. He says it was the 25th. (*L'Enseignement mutuel*, p. 219.)

It seems unusually difficult to keep the Lancasterian numbers correct. Henry Dunn, who, copying Corston, gives the 27th of November, 1778, as the date of birth, states that Lancaster died on the 23rd of October, 1838, "in the fifty-first year of his age." (*Sketches*, p. 21.) This obvious error is repeated in several Lives.

In a biography which I wrote for the *Schoolmaster*, the printer makes me say that the only assertion which I can make with confidence respecting Lancaster's birth is that it occurred in 1878.

† Now called Tabard Street.

could afford to live in a better ; hence it follows that Lancaster's father must have been rather poor. He was, in fact, an old soldier, maintaining a large family on his pension and the profits of his industry as cane-sieve maker. Lancaster himself says "the circumstances of his friends were decent and comfortable, but still not so far above the poor as to open the prospects of ambition or fan the spark of human pride into an early or premature flame."* Elsewhere† he says that his father had a "good business of which himself was the author."

It is evident from his writings‡ that Joseph Lancaster's education must have been of a very modest kind.§ Where it was received is not recorded, but, as his father was a zealous Non-conformist, and as there was in Gravel Lane, not far from his home, a Dissenting Charity School,|| one may venture to conjecture that this was the school to which the boy was sent.

Wherever it may have been, it gave him one of the greatest boons that a school can give—it gave him a love of reading. "I soon learnt to read," he says, "soon read with delight ; my book became my meat, drink, and diversion. . . . One of the earliest books I remember reading was the New Testament. At the early age of about eight years, I recollect the spot where I perused over the sacred pages in secret retirement and delight. . . . My heart was often filled with love and devotion to God, with breathings of good will to the human race, and with desires to devote my life to their good in the service of God."¶

At the age of fourteen, Clarkson's essay on the Slave Trade inspired him with the determination to go to Jamaica to teach the blacks. Saying nothing of his purpose to his parents, he started walking to Bristol. His provision for the journey consisted chiefly of a Bible and a Pilgrim's Progress, and he might have starved had he not fallen in with a friendly artisan who was tramping to the same place. Arrived at the city, he was accepted as a volunteer and sent to Milford (presumably to join a man-of-war). Though a tendency to preach earned him the nickname of "parson," his evident sincerity won the respect of the sailors, who laughed at him, but did not treat him unkindly. When he had been on board about three weeks he was rescued through the interposition of the Rev. Thomas Urwick with a naval officer of high rank whom Urwick happened to know. This incident shows that, at the age of fourteen, Lancaster had already developed certain qualities which eminently distinguished him in later life—easily kindled enthusiasm, profound belief in his power to

* *Epitome*, p. 5. † *The Lancasterian System with Improvements*, p. vii.

‡ According to his rival, Dr. Bell, even these would give too high an idea of his culture. "Ever since I conversed with him and read some of his familiar letters," says Bell, "I have suspected that he has much assistance in his published works of every kind. He is illiterate and ignorant." *Bell*, II., 149.

§ "It delights the alarmists for the Church to represent Mr. Lancaster as an ignorant and illiterate man." *Schools for All*, p. 73.

|| *Dr. Watts*, Essay . . . of Charity Schools, p. 12. ¶ *Corston*, p. 4.

accomplish his designs, and an utter incapacity of judging the adaptability of means to ends.

Joseph, after being thwarted in his desire of visiting his black brethren, returned home, but what he did next is not chronicled, and how long he was doing it no one can exactly tell. His own statements, when not vague, are self-contradictory, and the statements of both Corston and Dunn, his biographers, are of the same character. He says that with a view of promoting the happiness of his fellow-men he "looked forward to the Dissenting Ministry at the age of sixteen,"* and it is not improbable that the years between fourteen and sixteen were spent in improving his very imperfect education. His own intentions were frustrated, and the hopes of his parents were disappointed, for he "became a frequenter of the religious meetings of the Society of Christians called Quakers, and ultimately a member of that Society."* The history of his boyhood, and the reputation for persuasive speech which he acquired in later life, show that preaching was his vocation, and it was a peculiarly perverse fate which led him to join a denomination that has no preachers. Bentham calls him a "self-styled Quaker," and certainly there was nothing Quakerlike in Lancaster, except the garb and the grammar. The restrained ardour, the modest demeanour, the severe self-control, the prudence and probity in affairs, that generally mark Friends, were all conspicuously lacking in him.

* *Appeal for Justice*, p. 3.

CHAPTER II.

The Young Schoolmaster.

The career of preacher being closed to Lancaster, he decided to adopt that of teacher. After being employed for a time as assistant at two schools, "one a boarding, the other a day school," and thus becoming "well acquainted with all the defects attendant on the old system of tuition in both kinds of schools,"* he set up a school of his own.

In his *Report of J. Lancaster's Progress from the year 1798*, p. 1, he says :—"The undertaking was began (*sic*) under the hospitable roof of an affectionate parent ; my father gave the schoolroom, rent free, and, after fitting up the desks and forms myself, I had the pleasure, before I was eighteen, of having over ninety children under instruction, many of whom I educated free of expense. As the number of scholars continued to increase, I soon had occasion to rent larger premises."

Nothing could be more explicit, and the reader would state without hesitation that Lancaster's first school was opened in Kent Street in 1796. But in *An Epitome of some of the chief Events and Transactions in the Life of Joseph Lancaster* (p. 5), he says, "In 1798 he obtained from his father the use of a room in which he might keep a cheap school for the poor of the neighbourhood. The school increased so as repeatedly to occasion its removal to more capacious buildings." This is so evidently another account of the same transaction that there would be no need to quote it but for the contradiction respecting the year. In 1798 Lancaster was twenty, not eighteen. But as he was incapable of accuracy we shall probably do him no injustice if we assume that his subtraction was wrong, especially as, writing in 1804 to Dr. Bell, he says, "In 1798 I began a day school."† The mistake as to age is repeated in *Oppression and Persecution*, p. 30, where Lancaster says that in 1798 "he had completed only eighteen years of age."

There is a further difficulty. In *An Account of the Progress of Joseph Lancaster's Plan* (p. 1) he says that "in the year 1798" he "opened a school in St. George's Fields for [the education of the children of the poor at a very reduced charge]"; and in *An Appeal for Justice* (p. 3) he says : "At the age of twenty I established in the Borough Road, Southwark, an institution for the education of poor children." Joseph Fox says : "His father followed his business as a cane-sieve maker in or near St. George's Fields, where he accommodated his son with part of his premises for a schoolroom. The workmanship of the school, in fitting up the desks and benches, was all done by Mr. Lancaster himself, and on the New Year's Day of 1798 he opened

* Letter to Bell, *Bell*, II., p. 124.

† *Bell*, II., p. 124.

his school.”* If this school was, as Lancaster and Fox both say, on the father’s premises, how could it be, as Lancaster says, in Borough Road? He could not have forgotten the place by 1806, and we must therefore conclude either that he used the term “Borough Road” very loosely, or that his father had removed from Kent Street. I think that the first is the more likely explanation.

But for the lower place which a schoolmaster held in common estimation, there would be no cause for Lancaster to regret his change of career, for he was as likely to excel in teaching as in preaching. He had many of the qualifications of a great teacher—zeal, self-confidence, ingenuity in devising methods, intuitive insight into the nature of children, an ardent love for them, and rare power of managing them. He threw himself into the work of his new school with characteristic enthusiasm. For the good or the delight of his pupils no labour was too severe and no sacrifice too onerous. For them he spent body, mind, and estate (and as much of the estate of other people as they could be induced to part with); on holidays he led large parties of them for excursions into the suburbs; on Sundays, from forty to sixty of them, bringing their own bread and butter used to take tea with him; and during the severe winter of 1799–1800 he fed and clothed some sixty or eighty of them.

The question naturally suggests itself how a youth who, for his own food and clothing, was dependent on the fees of a school which claimed to be exceptionally cheap, could provide food and clothing for his pupils. Lancaster himself partly answers it when he says, “I set out with some advantages, arising not from large funds or many advisers, but from my peculiar situation and connexions. A youth of eighteen [twenty], entering into my first pursuit with all the energy I was capable of—a father’s table—free from expensive habits—a simple manner of living—and having no rent to pay—a stranger to the love of gain—relying on the blessing of Heaven to prosper my exertions.”†

This is true, but it is only part of the truth. He was a skilful, persistent, and unblushing beggar, and he had joined a sect always famous for its liberal and unostentatious charities. Two of his neighbours—Thomas Sturge of Newington Butts and Anthony Sterry of High Street, Borough—early came to his assistance, and Elizabeth Fry, the friend of prisoners, solicited subscriptions for him among her fellow Quakers.‡

To a school where there was much to receive and little to pay, and where the master was the embodiment of kindness and generosity, the children came in crowds, and one room after another grew too small. I cannot hope to reconcile the

* *A Vindication of Mr. Lancaster’s System of Education*, p. 18. This is confirmed by Lancaster in *The Lancasterian System* (p. vii.), where he says that he “commenced a school in his father’s house in London in the first month, 1798.”

† *Report of Joseph Lancaster’s Progress from the Year 1798*, p. 3.

‡ *Improvements*, 3rd ed., pp. 2, 3. See p. 66 post.


contradictory accounts respecting the number or situation of the rooms borrowed, rented, or built, but I give Corston's as being, at least, explicit. "In a short time the first schoolroom was found not large enough : a workshop was fitted up as the second : a room was then hired at a distance from the parental house ; and after another change to neighbouring premises, a building was commenced on Joseph's own foundation and expense."*

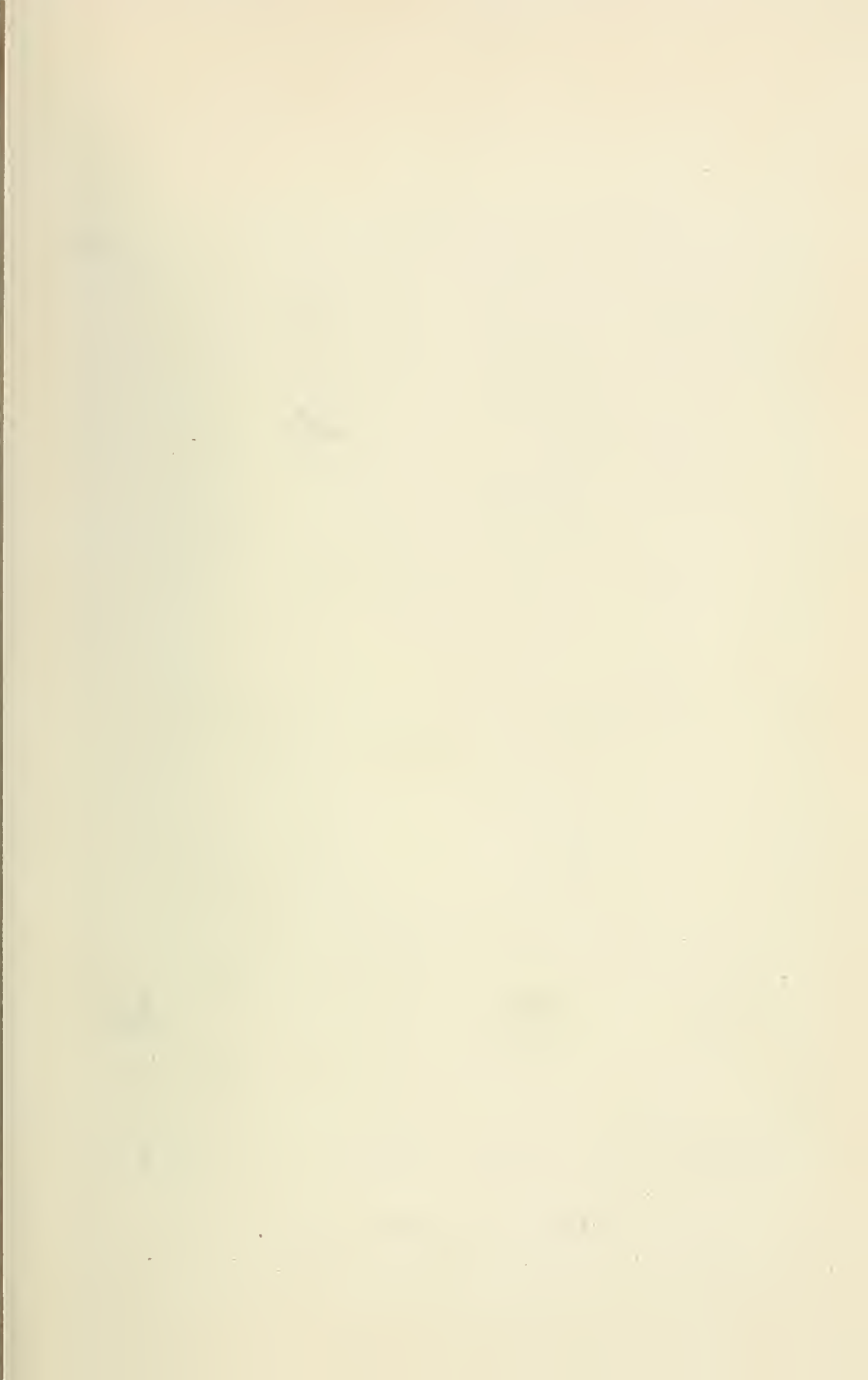
Dr. Rendle, the historian of Southwark, who lived for many years near the Borough Road,† and was much interested in Lancaster, says that his first school was in Kent Street, and the second in a sort of shed in Newington Causeway, opposite Brandon Row. "Probably this shed was enlarged to meet the increasing demands [for accommodation], and some Friends guaranteed the rent. About 1803 the third school was opened in James Street, Borough Road, in a rough, dilapidated, barn-like building, which was to some extent fitted up for the purpose." There seems no doubt that the new school in Belvedere Place was erected in 1804, and it is probably this which Dr. Rendle says was "on City land opposite the present site, Lancaster having the ground fenced in as far back as Martin Street." Dr. Rendle adds : "After this we find him in an unused parish school," but confirmation seems to be entirely lacking.‡

* *Corston*, p. 9.

† Dr. Rendle was for many years the medical officer of the Borough Road College, and through his influence the name of the street at the corner of which the college stood was changed to Lancaster Street.

‡ *Notes and Queries*, 6th Series, IV., p. 352.





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LANCASTER'S MONITORS' BADGES.

From the original badges in the possession of the British and Foreign School Society.

CHAPTER III.

The Monitorial System.

Lancaster's success in attracting pupils nearly overwhelmed him. They were too many for him to teach alone, and he could not afford to pay assistants. The idea therefore occurred to him of making the boys who knew a little teach the boys who knew less. To us there seems nothing very important or very novel in this, but Lancaster was a man who, if he had only found out for himself the advantage of tying a knot on the end of a thread, would have proclaimed aloud that he had made an original discovery destined to regenerate society, and would have elaborated a complete scheme of knots for different threads or different kinds of sewing.

The idea of monitors* having occurred to him, he set about working it out with extraordinary zeal and energy, and, as he really possessed a fertile invention, he soon produced a very complex system. The new kind of teacher was almost necessarily followed by a new kind of discipline, and, the appetite for change having grown with what it fed on, a new kind of teaching came next.

For practical imitation Lancaster offers as little to the teacher of the present day as Noah offers to the captain of a Cunarder, but his methods possess sufficient historical interest to justify a brief description. The very essence of the system was the monitor. Little was left for the master to do except to organise, to reward, to punish, and to inspire. When a child was admitted, a monitor assigned him his class; while he remained, a monitor taught him (with nine other pupils); when he was absent, one monitor ascertained the fact, and another found out the reason; a monitor examined him periodically, and when he made progress, a monitor promoted him; a monitor ruled the writing paper; a monitor made or mended the pens; a monitor had charge of the slates and books; and a monitor-general looked after all the other monitors. Every monitor wore a leather ticket, gilt, and lettered "Monitor of the First Class," "Reading Monitor of the Second Class," &c.

The government of the school was almost automatic. "The master," says Lancaster, "should be a silent by-stander and inspector. What a master says should be done; but if he teaches on this system, he will find the authority is not personal,—that when the pupils, as well as the schoolmaster, understand how to act and learn on this system, the system, not the master's

* Lancaster's application of the *term* appears to be original. "*Teachers Assistants, Tutors* as I [Bell] have styled them, or *Monitors* as he [Lancaster] denominated them." *Bell*, II., p. 133.

vague, discretionary, uncertain judgment, will be in practice. A command will be obeyed by any boy, because it is a command, and the whole school will obey the common, known commands of the school, from being merely known as such, let who will give them. In a common school the authority of the master is personal, and the rod is his sceptre. His absence is the immediate signal for confusion and riot; and in his absence, his assistants will rarely be minded. But in a school properly regulated and conducted on my plan, when the master leaves school, the business will go on as well in his absence as in his presence, because the authority is not personal. This mode of insuring obedience is a novelty in the history of education.”*

An article in the *Philanthropist*† for 1811, “On the Importance of Promoting the General Education of the Poor,” gives the following among numerous illustrations of the automatic character of a monitorial school:—

“One of the peculiar features of this plan is the extraordinary manner in which the talents of boys are drawn forth, and many instances may be given, where young lads, acting upon this system, have evinced energies which are rarely to be met with in mature age. In the Royal Free School, at the Borough Road, a little boy of twelve or thirteen years of age often commands the whole school, and that with the same ease to himself, and with equal obedience from the many hundred children of which the school is composed, as a military officer would experience with a body of well-disciplined troops; the firmness, promptness and decision attendant on military order are interwoven into the school discipline, but without the least severity; a constant activity is maintained, by which the minds of the children are amused; they acquire the more important habit of fixing their attention; their duties are made a pleasure, and their progress in learning is proportionally rapid.

“In Shropshire and Staffordshire in the space of only eight months a boy scarcely seventeen has lately organised schools and instructed schoolmasters for above one thousand children; the affectionate and mild but firm conduct of this amiable lad rendered each school a scene of pleasure and delight, in which his steady application of the system of order proved its utility and excellence. When he took leave of one school, in order to open another at a different place, it was a most delightful sight to behold the whole school of children lamenting his departure, as they would the loss of their nearest friend. He introduced the system so completely into one school that the children required very little attention to execute the plan, and thereby teach themselves; to a person not an eye-witness it would scarcely seem

* *British System of Education*, p. 45.

† P. 83. The *Philanthropist* was a periodical started by William Allen to promote the many benevolent schemes with which he was connected. The first of its seven volumes (that for 1811) was printed at Lancaster's school.

credible, but it is a fact, that the master, who was a shoe-maker, would sit at the head of the school with his last and leather, and alternately work and overlook the tuition of the school; he had no occasion to exert himself to prevent confusion, for the order of the system was so far introduced into the habits of the children, that they would themselves be the first to correct the smallest disorderly movement; the success of this boy's labour was so great in one instance as to induce a countryman to go to the clergyman of the parish, who was the patron of the school, to complain that his children learned so much and so fast that, as he did not get on at such a rate when he was a child at school, he thought witchcraft alone could produce such an effect upon his children. The worthy clergyman, though scarcely able to refrain from laughter, was obliged to put on a grave countenance, and assure his parishioner that neither magic, incantation, nor witchcraft had anything to do in the business.

"There are other young men who, before they were eighteen years of age, have organised schools for more than two thousand children; one of them opened a school at Clewer, near Windsor, which was founded by the benevolent Countess of Harcourt. This school was visited by the Queen and the Princesses, who expressed great approbation, and the Queen graciously complimented the lad who had executed his business so perfectly. This youth afterwards trained the schoolmaster, and organised the school for three hundred boys at Canterbury; it is kept in the old palace of the Archbishop, the scene of many an inquisition in former days, on account of the profession of the Protestant faith. The same young man now presides over a school for about three hundred boys at Dover, which was instituted under the patronage of its patriotic member, John Jackson, Esq.*"

Lancaster was a born organiser of children. He left nothing to chance or caprice. To him we owe the pregnant mottoes, "A place for everything and everything in its place," and "Let every child at every moment have something to do and a motive for doing it." Each act of the school-life was regulated by a well-considered series of signals and commands, and there were many labour-saving devices. To avoid, for instance, the waste of time involved in calling the names of the whole school to discover the two or three absentees, each boy was given a fixed number. Corresponding numbers were painted in a row on the wall; the class was marched into position; each boy took his place under his own number, and the vacant numbers instantly showed who were missing.

Order and quiet are not synonymous, and a monitorial school, divided into classes of ten, though perfectly orderly, must have been very noisy when in full work. *A priori* inference in this matter is confirmed by a curious piece of evidence. Mr. Baines

* Afterwards Sir John Jackson, merchant, East India Director, philanthropist, and Quaker.

of Carshalton, speaking in 1878 within the walls of that school in the Borough Road which was the direct successor of Lancaster's, said: "I cannot help comparing the aspect of this room with what it was thirty-seven years ago. Then I was a student here. . . . Round the room were six hundred or seven hundred boys in little drafts, singing '*L-e-a-p, leap, to jump.*' The babel was such that I remember on one occasion trying if I should be heard singing '*Black-eyed Susan.*' I sang and no one noticed me. . . . I was Monitor of Order at the time."

One of the "Ingoldsby Legends" describes the pranks of three runaway imps in London,—

"Back they came galloping through the Strand,
When Joseph Lancaster, stick in hand,
Popped up his head before 'em. . . .

"Fear each assails,
Everyone quails,
'Oh, dear! He'll tickle our little black tails!
Have done, have done,
Here's that son of a gun,
Old Jo, come after us; run boys, run!"

In a footnote explaining that Lancaster was "the inventor of the method of mutual instruction in schools before Dr. Bell, though the system is usually named after the latter," Barham is less than just to Bell; but he is less than just to Lancaster in making him wield the rod, of which he had a perfect horror. The stimulating motives to which he appealed were emulation and the hope of reward, and the deterrent motive the sense of shame.

Emulation was fostered by an elaborate system of place taking, not only among the boys of the same class, but among different classes; and virtue was by no means its own sole reward. Prizes were given with a lavish hand. Individually these cost little, but in the aggregate their price was considerable. Thus, in the accounts for the year ending Midsummer, 1803, when the number of pupils on the rolls was 217, there appear the following items:—

	£	s.	d.
Five thousand toys - - -	16	16	0
Seven dozen (old) children's books -	1	9	0
Twenty-five French half-crowns engraved			
" A reward for merit " -	4	17	6
Three star medals - - -		18	0
Eight silver pens, 3s. each - - -	1	4	0
Thirty-six purses - - -	12	6*	

When a boy was promoted he was rewarded. "It is no unusual thing with me," says Lancaster, "to deliver one or two hundred prizes at the same time. And at such times the

countenances of the whole school exhibit a most pleasing scene of delight : as the boys who obtain prizes commonly walk round the school in procession holding the prizes in their hands and an herald proclaiming before them ‘ These good boys have obtained prizes for going into another class.’ ”*

Virtue of many kinds was rewarded by little tickets, which were exchanged for money at a fixed rate, or by badges which were exchanged for toys ; and the specially deserving constituted an Order of Merit.

Every member of this Order “ was distinguished by a silver medal suspended from his neck by a plated chain.”†

The punishments were varied and curious, and it is doubtful whether the victim would always prefer them to the rod, the use of which they were meant to obviate. For “ repeated or frequent ” idleness, or talking, a boy had a wooden log put round his neck, which served him as a pillory.‡ “ If this is unavailing, it is common to fasten the legs of offenders together with wooden shackles, one or more according to the offence. . . . Thus accoutred he is ordered to walk round the schoolroom till, tired out, he is glad to sue for liberty and promise his endeavour to behave more steadily in future. Should not this punishment have the desired effect, the left hand is tied behind the back, or wooden shackles fastened from elbow to elbow behind the back. Sometimes the legs are tied together. Occasionally boys are put in a sack or in a basket suspended to the roof of the school, in the sight of all the pupils, who frequently smile at the *birds in the cage*. . . . Frequent or old offenders are yoked together sometimes, by a piece of wood that fastens round all their necks, and thus confined, they parade the school walking backwards. . . . When a boy is disobedient to his parents, profane in his language, or has committed any offence against morality, or is remarkable for slovenliness, it is usual for him to be dressed up with labels describing his offence, and a tin or paper crown on his head. . . . When a boy comes to school with dirty face or hands, and it seems to be more the effect of habit than of accident, a girl is appointed to wash his face, in the sight of the whole school. . . . The same event takes place as to girls when in habits of slothfulness.”§ Boys who were kept in were tied to the desks in such a manner that they could not untie themselves. A truant, decked with a card describing his offence, was tied to a post. “ When any boy repeats the crime, or is incorrigible, he is sometimes tied up in a blanket, and left to sleep at night on the floor in the school-house.”||

Lancaster prided himself on having discovered the *best* system of education, but the discovery had been accidental. What he had set out to discover was a *cheap* system ; and, whenever he

* *Improvements*, 3rd ed., p. 88. † *Id.*, p. 94. ‡ *Id.*, p. 191. § *Id.*, p. 102.

|| *Id.*, p. 114. These punishments are quoted from the 1806 edition of the *Improvements*. Lancaster had invented several others before 1810, when *The British System of Education* was published.

boasted that the article which he produced was better than any other, he never forgot to boast that it also cost less. He declares : " During eight years [1] have been continually making experiments . . . and the result, as far as it has [been] attained at present, is that by an intire (*sic*) *new system* of education one thousand children may be taught in one schoolroom, under the care of one master, and a great proportion of these may begin and finish their education in twelve months ; *that* education comprising the art of reading, writing, and arithmetic. . . . The whole expense not exceeding seven shillings each child for twelve months, and probably may be reduced by the perseverance of the inventor under *unmerited opposition* to four."*

The same desire to economise, which was the first motive for the use of monitors, was also the first motive for changes in methods of instruction. It was to avoid the cost of reading-books that Lancaster introduced reading-sheets ; it was to avoid the cost of paper, pens, and ink that he introduced slates ;† it was to avoid the cost of arithmetic text-books and the "cyphering"-books into which it was the custom to copy all worked "sums" that he introduced his wonderful "plan whereby any child who can read may teach arithmetic with the utmost certainty."

According to this plan, the monitor was provided with a book of examples and a key, not merely showing the complete solution, but also describing, step by step, the processes by which the "answer" was obtained. If the question were one in simple addition, for instance, the monitor might read from the key—"First column : 7 and 9 are 16, and 3 are 19, and 5 are 24. Set down 4 under the 7 and carry 2 to the next column" ; and the class would thereupon set down the 4 as told. It is doubtful whether monitor or pupils would understand these steps, and it is certain that neither would understand the reasons for them. The *Edinburgh Review*,‡ commenting on this process, asserts : "It is manifest that any rule in Algebra may be communicated by the same process. . . . Every part of geometrical science may be taught by similar means. . . . It only requires that a form of notation borrowed from the algebraic calculus should first be agreed upon. . . . And, in general, the application of the sciences of number and quantity to experiment are all capable of being communicated by a person ignorant of them but able to read, to as many others as can hear the sound of his voice at once."

Though we can only smile at the rapture with which Lancaster and his admirers sing the praises of his plan of teaching arithmetic, we must recognise that he made many small

* *Appeal for Justice*, p. 3.

† Lancaster never asserts in so many words that he *invented* school slates, though he repeatedly claims credit for "introducing" them. Buisson (*Dictionnaire, s. v. Ardoise*) says that Pestalozzi was the earliest to employ them, and Sir Thomas Bernard (*The New School*, p. 56) that "for the general use of slates we are indebted first to Mr. Lancaster."

‡ Vol. XVII. (November, 1810), p. 74.

improvements in the details of instruction, and that he introduced one practice which seems almost an inspiration; he combined the lessons in reading, writing and spelling; even the beginners of the alphabet class traced in sand the letters which they were learning to name. Having allowed this practice to lapse into forgetfulness for many years, we are now hailing "Correlation" as a blessed gift of the German Herbart.

Lancaster honestly believed that his system entitled him to the boundless gratitude of all nations, and he would not have bartered his chance of immortality with the inventors of printing or the discoverer of America. That he should pronounce his own creation excellent is natural, but that others should pronounce it very good is somewhat remarkable. Yet such is the case. Mr. Samuel Whitbread* described it in the House of Commons as "happily combining rules by which the object of learning must be infallibly attained with expedition and cheapness and holding out the fairest prospect of eminent utility to mankind."

Brougham and Sydney Smith exhausted superlatives in praising it in the *Edinburgh Review*; James Pillans, the rector of Edinburgh High School, was an enthusiastic admirer; and one of his assistants wrote that it had "converted a laborious

* In the House of Commons, on the 19th of February, 1807, Mr. Whitbread was introducing a Bill for the reform of the Poor Laws, and proposed, as part of that reform, the establishment of parochial schools. Attendance was to be voluntary, but he was confident that soon every man in England and Wales would, as in Scotland, feel it a disgrace not to have his children instructed. He said nothing of the expense, for he was sure that no statesman would hesitate on that score alone to accept it. for in the saving of the poor's rate it would repay itself a hundred, and in order, morality and virtue, ten thousand-fold. Mr. Whitbread proceeded:—

"Sir, I cannot help noticing to the House that this is a period particularly favourable for the institution of a national system of education, because within a few years there has been discovered a plan for the instruction of youth which is now brought to a state of great perfection, happily combining rules by which the object of learning must be infallibly attained with expedition and cheapness, and holding out the fairest prospect of eminent utility to mankind. Sir, the meritorious person with whom parts of the plan of education to which I have alluded have had their rise, who has also had the good sense unostentatiously to add the acknowledged discoveries of others to his own, is well known to many members of this House, and to a large part of the nation; and he is patronised by persons of the first distinction in this and a neighbouring kingdom; he has further obtained the high honour of the Royal sanction and support. The gentleman whom I mean to point out to you is Mr. Joseph Lancaster. Sir, I know that he has been the object of much opposition from bigotry and prejudice, but I believe him to be on every account deserving of encouragement and protection; and I am happy to find that the unfounded clamour which has been raised against him has in no degree prevailed, that he still enjoys that distinguished and discriminating support I have before mentioned, and, as it frequently happens, that what was intended to overturn has tended only to strengthen and support him. The principles upon which he proceeds at the Free School in the Borough are upon examination so obviously founded in utility and economy that they must prevail and will finally, I have no doubt, furnish a mode of instruction not only for this country but for all nations advanced in any degree in civilisation."—*Substance of a Speech on the Poor Laws . . . by Mr. Whitbread (1807), p. 33.*

and often irksome profession into the most easy and delightful employment possible.”*

What is still more remarkable is that, highly as Lancaster's supporters extolled his system, his opponents extolled it as highly. Thus Mrs. Trimmer, whose shrill treble led the chorus of detraction, wrote :—

“A school consisting of *seven or eight hundred boys*, chiefly collected from the purlieus of St. George's Fields, trained in habits of diligence and order, and taught with surprising expedition, and at a moderate expence, the useful habits of *reading, writing, and accounts*, under the conduct of *one master*, is an interesting spectacle, which affords a striking contrast to the schools wherein the children of the common people generally receive their education ; and it is impossible to view such an institution without earnestly wishing to see the *real benefits* of it extended to all the children of the lower classes in this nation. But much as the *mechanical part* of Mr. L.'s plan must be approved by all who are advocates for the instruction of the rising generation of the labouring people,”†

The Rev. E. W. Grinfield is even more emphatic in his praise, though he thought the condemnation of the system a fitting theme for a sermon. In this sermon‡ he described as a “fact too notorious to require any evidence” that “a scheme of instruction” had “been devised of incalculable celerity and of boundless extent ; so cheap that poverty itself may purchase ; so easy that dulness itself may comprehend.”

“John Bowles, Esq.,”§ in an attack on this scheme, while accusing Lancaster of stealing it, did not deny that it was worth stealing ; in fact, he thought that it was too good for people who had to work for their living. “The utility,” he says, “of the mechanical part of this system in affording most extraordinary facilities for instruction no one is more disposed than myself to admit ; though I must be here allowed to observe that its very excellence in that respect seems to impose the necessity of much caution, lest it should operate as a *disqualification* rather than a qualification for the duties of the industrious poor.”

Why this apparent inconsistency ? Why these blessings of the system from Balaams whom neither ass nor angel could turn from their purpose of cursing it ? Its cheapness delighted them, its efficiency surprised them, but its excellence in these respects only made it the more dangerous—for it was unsectarian. The fundamental rule of Lancaster's institution was—“This school is not established to promote the religious principles of any particular sect, but, setting aside all party distinctions, its object is to instruct youth in useful learning, in the leading and uncontroverted principles of Christianity, and to train them in the practice of moral habits conducive to their future welfare

* For the full reports, see Bentham's *Chrestomathia*, pp. 86, 93.

† *Comparative View*, p. 6.

‡ *The Crisis of Religion*.

§ *A Letter addressed to Samuel Whitbread, Esq., M.P.*, p. 2.

as virtuous men and useful members of society.”* Lancaster was sincerely attached to religion regarded as an act of devotion, but he was very tolerant of differences of opinion concerning religion regarded as a body of theology. He was not of those who would compass sea and land to make one proselyte. Provided his pupils became good Christians, he cared not whether they became in addition good Churchmen, good Baptists, or good Quakers. He contended that education was a high and holy thing, of infinite value for its own sake. He therefore implored the warring sects to proclaim a truce and unite to carry on the great work—a work which it was their duty to do both as lovers of God and as lovers of their country. To labour for a common end they would have to stand upon a common ground, and he says “the grand basis of Christianity alone is broad enough for the whole bulk of mankind to stand on and join hands as children of one family.”† Elsewhere,‡ addressing the sects, he exclaims : “You have been contending whose influence should be greatest in society while a national benefit has been lost and the poor objects of it become a prey to vice. A national evil requires a national remedy : let not this any longer be delayed ; let your minds expand, free from every narrow principle, and let the public good be the sole object of your united Christian efforts.”

There may have been denominations that had wealth enough to establish schools for all their children—there was no denomination that had the necessary zeal and enlightenment ; in many districts, therefore, the obvious alternatives were a school for all or a school for nobody, and Lancaster was the first to show how, with the Bible as the sole text-book, the schoolmaster could teach the many great truths on which Christians are agreed, leaving the home or the Church to add the few minor doctrines that divide the sects. When, in 1870, the Government proposed that the religious instruction in rate-aided schools should be undenominational, some opponents, though knowing from observation that sectarianism might exist without religion, contended that religion could not exist without sectarianism. Mr. Gladstone replied, in effect, that what was proposed was not only theoretically possible, but the experience of the British and Foreign School Society,§ extending over some sixty years, showed that it offered no practical difficulty. Thus it is to Joseph Lancaster that we are indebted for first showing the feasibility of the compromise whereby the children of all denominations may, with perfect impartiality, be brought up together in the fear of the Lord and the knowledge of His Word.

* *Improvements*, 3rd ed., p. 25. † *Id.*, p. 184. ‡ *Id.*, p. viii.

§ The original rule of the British and Foreign School Society (which has never been altered) said that the Holy Scriptures should be read and “no catechism or peculiar religious tenets shall be taught in the schools.” The Education Act of 1870 (sec. 14) says “no religious catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination shall be taught in the school.”

CHAPTER IV.

Lancaster's Supporters.

We have seen that when Lancaster was only a charitable schoolmaster he obtained subscriptions from his neighbours and co-religionists ; when he began to announce himself to the world as an educational reformer, men of wealth and rank were added to his patrons, and he resolved to call his establishment a Free School. In June 1801* he put up a notice, "All who will may send their children and have them educated freely (the expenses of writing books excepted), and those to whom the above offer may not prove acceptable, may pay for them at a very moderate price."† As usual his accounts are self-contradictory, for in the "Report of J. Lancaster's Progress" (1811, p. 3) he says, "About 1804 the school doors were thrown open for all that would send their children and have them educated freely." This must be wrong, for in the balance sheet dated "25th of sixth month (June) 1802" he gives a statement "of money collected and expended for the use of the Free School, Borough Road, Southwark, instituted by Joseph Lancaster, 6th month, 1801," and states that "exclusive of the Free School above one hundred scholars have received instruction at about half the common price. From such as are unable to pay, free scholars are selected."‡

The first man of rank to extend his patronage to Lancaster was John, fifteenth Lord Somerville,§ and friendship with him brought a second of even higher rank, John, the sixth Duke of Bedford. Writing some years later the Duke says, "It was at Christmas 1802 or 1803 (I think it was the latter,||) that I was invited by my friend Lord Somerville, to visit the school of a humble but industrious Quaker in the Borough. I acceded with pleasure to his proposal, and went with him to the school of Joseph Lancaster. We passed the greater part of the morning there, and I was so well pleased with the simplicity and utility of the system, that I instantly became a subscriber¶ and have

* In *Improvements*, p. 23, he says : "The boys' school was instituted as a Free School by Joseph Lancaster in 1801, and is actually [in 1804] extended to seven hundred boys." In the early reports of the British and Foreign School Society the term "Free School" is used with a certain amount of ambiguity. Sometimes it means that the school is open to the children of all denominations, sometimes that it is open without payment. Gratuitous education was abolished at the beginning of 1827, when a uniform fee of 2*d.* was imposed.—*Twenty-second Annual Report* (1827), p. 4.

† *Improvements*, p. 25.

‡ *Id.*, pp. 13, 14, 15.

§ (1765-1819). Succeeded to the title in 1796.

|| I think that the year was 1802, as his name appears in a subscription list dated "3rd day of 3rd month (March) 1803."—*Improvements*, p. 26.

¶ The Duke subscribed £100 a year to the British and Foreign School Society, and every subsequent Duke followed his example till 1889.

continued to give his later and more enlarged sphere of education my humble but earnest support.”*

Corston says : “The schoolroom excited much attention and inquiry ; visitors, not satisfied with seeing, were anxious to have some outlines of the system in print. Foreign princes, ambassadors, peers, commoners, ladies of distinction, bishops and archbishops, Jews and Turks, all visited the school with ‘wonder-waiting eyes,’ and were equally desirous of carrying home a memorial of the interesting scenes they had witnessed.”† This led to the publication, early in 1803, of “Improvements in Education,” a pamphlet of 66 pages giving an account of the system. Before the close of the year a second impression was called for ; in 1805 a third (of 3,500) was issued ; and in 1806 appeared the fourth edition of what had now grown into a book of 211 pages.§ This wide diffusion of the “Improvements” was at once the cause and the consequence of wide interest in the school.

The Duke of Bedford and Lord Somerville were only the vanguard of a noble army of visitors. A list published in 1806‡ contains the names of the Duke and Duchess of Somerset the Archbishop of Dublin, the Bishops of Carlisle, Exeter, Durham, Chichester, and Kilmore ; the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer and Lord Chief Justice ; Lord and Lady Sheffield, the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Earl and Countess Stanhope, the Earl of Winchelsea, Lord Henry Petty, Lord Teignmouth, Lord Webb Seymour, Lord Robert Seymour, the Marquis of Douglas, Lord and Lady Fincastle, Prince de Biron, Lord Loftus, the Countess of Harrington, the Countess of Harcourt, the Countess of Hardwicke, the Earl of Selkirk, Lord Clifden, Lord Boyle, Lord Charleville, Lord Spencer Chichester, the Portuguese Ambassador, and the Dean of Westminster.

Among these noble and most noble, very rev. and right rev. visitors, Lancaster mentions four untitled commoners. Could he have foreseen the future he must have mentioned a fifth, who had already procured for him a protector of incalculable advantage for the promotion of his system, and who was in many a dark day of difficulty and distress to soothe him with his sympathy and aid him with his counsel and his purse. This fifth was William Corston.

Corston was born at Fincham, Norfolk, in the year 1759. At the age of twenty, when he had not long entered into the straw hat business, he was walking from Deptford to Greenwich and saw an inscription “To the Glory of God and the benefit of poor children this school was erected by Dean Stanhope.” While he was gazing upon it, the children burst forth into a hymn of praise. “My heart was melted,” he writes, twenty-five years later, “and it pleased God to implant within me a fervent wish

* *Life of William Allen*, I. 95.

† *Corston*, p. 11.

‡ *Fox's Vindication*, pp. 19-21, and *Corston*, p. 11.

§ *Improvements*, 3rd ed., p. 207.

and desire that I might one day thus honour Him, and through all the vicissitudes of the intervening period my hope was seldom long clouded. I knew not how it was to be accomplished, but being assured that it was a divine impression, my mind was constantly endeavouring to find out a way.* At length he found out a way in the line of his business. England spent hundreds of thousands of pounds every year on straw plat imported from Leghorn, and it occurred to him that English fingers might weave English straw into an article as beautiful and as useful. He accordingly started a school of industry in his native village in 1802. The plat made was so satisfactory that twenty of the leading firms in London certified they could not tell it from the imported article; the Queen wore the first hat made of it, and the Society of Arts awarded the benevolent and ingenious trader a gold medal.†

On the 4th of June 1804, the Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor published a brief account of the "Day Schools in the Borough."‡ This fell into the hands of Corston, and he immediately wrote inviting Lancaster to take tea with him the next afternoon. A friendship, which subsisted through good report and ill for four-and-thirty years, ensued between the latter and the schoolmaster. Corston gave Lancaster an introduction to the Countess of Harcourt,§ who had encouraged him in the straw hat enterprise, and through her influence he obtained an interview with the King, who had already been interested in him by "Lord Somerville, a favourite servant of his sovereign."|| This led to a second interview in July 1805.¶ The King was staying at Weymouth and sent for Lancaster.

Corston gives the following as his account of the meeting:—"On entering the royal presence, the King said, 'Lancaster, I have sent for you to give me an account of your system of education, which, I hear, has met with opposition. One master teach five hundred children at the same time? How do you keep them in order, Lancaster?' Lancaster replied, 'Please thy Majesty, by the same principle thy Majesty's army is kept in order—by the word of command.' His Majesty replied, 'Good, good, it does not require an aged general to give the command—one of younger years can do it.' Lancaster observed that in his schools the teaching branch was performed by youths who acted as young monitors. The King assented and said, 'Good.' Lancaster then described his system; and he informed me that they all paid great attention, and were highly delighted; and as soon

* *Improvements*, 3rd ed., p. 127, and *Corston*, p. 14.

† *Imp.*, pp. 141, 145, 204.

‡ *Of the Education of the Poor*, p. 166.

§ George Simon, the Second Earl of Harcourt (1736–1809) was Master of Horse to the Queen.

|| The Duke of Bedford to William Allen, *Allen*, I., p. 95. In 1799, Lord Somerville was made one of the Lords of the Bedchamber. A great authority on agriculture, he was congenial company to the "Farmer King."

¶ *Corston*, p. 15, and *Hamel*, p. 18.

as he had finished, His Majesty said, 'Lancaster, I highly approve of your system, and it is my wish that every poor child in my dominions should be taught to read the Bible ; I will do anything you wish to promote this object.' 'Please, thy Majesty,' said Lancaster, 'if the system meets thy Majesty's approbation, I can go through the country and lecture on the system, and have no doubt but in a few months I shall be able to give thy Majesty an account where ten thousand poor children are being educated, and some of my youths instructing them.' His Majesty immediately replied, 'Lancaster, I will subscribe £100 annually* ; and,' addressing the Queen, 'You shall subscribe £50, Charlotte ; and the Princesses, £25 each,' and then added, 'Lancaster, you may have the money directly.' Lancaster observed, 'Please, thy Majesty, that will be setting thy nobles a good example.' The royal party appeared to smile at this observation ; but the Queen observed to His Majesty, 'How cruel it is that enemies should be found who endeavour to hinder his progress in so good a work.' To which the King replied : 'Charlotte, a good man seeks his reward in the world to come.' Joseph then withdrew."†

* The Royal subscription of £100 has been continued to this day.

† *Corston*, p. 16.

CHAPTER V.

Andrew Bell.

The royal patronage transformed an experiment into an institution, but it proved in the end a fatal favour, since it incited Lancaster to reckless speculations, and roused to active opposition those who had hitherto regarded him with passive disapproval. The King's protection secured him against a frontal attack, but a combined assault upon his flanks might be successful. To deny that the system ascribed to him had many merits would be little short of *lèse-majesté*, but he might be charged on the one hand with having stolen all these merits from Dr. Bell, and on the other with having made additions of his own subversive to religion.

Andrew Bell was born on the 27th of March, 1753. His parents were poor but Scotch, and, being Scotch, they sent him to college. When he had completed his course at the University of his native town, St. Andrews, he sailed to Virginia to make his fortune. His profession was teaching, but there was no fortune to be made by teaching—in those days—so he called commerce to the aid of education. In 1781, when the War of Independence caused him to go home, he took with him £350 in money, and left behind him to be sold nearly 40,000 pounds of tobacco.*

With him sailed two youths to whom he had been tutor, and he was occupied for the next three years in superintending their studies at his old University. When they had gone back to America, Bell, concluding that it would be to his advantage to combine preaching with teaching, took Anglican Orders, and was appointed Minister of the Episcopal Chapel, at Leith. The stipend was modest, and, as, after three years, there seemed (to use his own phrase) “no encouragement in the line of the Church” in Britain, he resolved to try whether the East Indies would not offer a better field for his ambition. Thinking that his market value would be enhanced thereby, he applied to St. Andrews “to be distinguished with the honourable title of D.D.” His mind, he wrote, was above his fortune and above his birth, and the fees would be duly paid. Whether the first or the second consideration weighed the more with them, the authorities were obliging, but instead of a D.D., they gave him an M.D.,† much to his disgust and disappointment. It would have been some consolation for the new-made physician if he might have prescribed for them. As he could not have this pleasure he merely refrained from thanking them, and the Principal reported that they were “much hurt with the neglect.”‡

* *Bell*, I., pp. 32–35, 117.

† The D.D. was added in 1812.

‡ *Dunn*, p. 26; *Bell*, I., p. 359.

The Rev. Dr. Bell reached Madras in June, 1787, and the wisdom of his enterprise became at once apparent. In August he was appointed chaplain of one regiment and deputy chaplain of another; in October he was appointed deputy chaplain of two more; and during the next year he made over £1,300 by courses of philosophical lectures. In 1789 he was appointed deputy chaplain of still another regiment, junior chaplain at Fort St. George, chaplain at Vellore, superintendent of the undertaker's office, and superintendent of the Military Male Orphan Asylum at Egmore.* Some of his many offices may have been discharged by proxy—the furnishing of funerals certainly was—but he personally discharged his duties at the Orphan Asylum, and enjoyed the dignified association with his old profession.

Bell had the usual difficulty with his assistants. They had taken to teaching because they could not find anything better, and when he had trained them to be worth something in the school they found that they were worth a great deal more outside. The introduction of sand-writing brought a crisis. "Happening on one of his morning rides to pass by a Malabar school he observed the children seated on the ground and writing with their fingers in sand, which had for that purpose been strewn before them. He hastened home . . . and gave immediate orders to the usher of the lowest class to teach the alphabet in the same way, with this difference only from the Malabar mode that the sand was strewn upon a board."† Ushers who had no enthusiasm for teaching would resent being asked to try experiments, and unsympathetic Europeans would deeply resent being asked to try a device picked up from the "niggers." To the superintendent's eagerness his assistants offered tacit resistance, but Bell was a man of indomitable will, and, if he could not accomplish his purpose in one way he would in another—if he could not get what he wanted done by men he would have it done by boys. Thus (in 1791 or 1792) he was driven by disloyalty, as Lancaster some eight years later was driven by distress, to the use of monitors, and, in his case as in Lancaster's, the use of monitors led to various changes in the methods of discipline and of instruction.‡

In 1796 Bell resolved to avail himself of a general order granting free passages to officers going to England for their health. He had intended returning to Madras, but, on arriving in London (with the £26,000 which he had saved in nine years) he changed his mind, and applied to the Directors of the East India Company for a pension, basing his application on the fact that he had drawn no salary as superintendent.§

* He states (*Ludus Literarius*, p. xiii.) that in 1789 he was "Minister of St. Mary's Church at Madras," but Southey does not record this appointment.

† Bell, I., p. 173; *The English School*, p. 31.

‡ *The English School*, p. 31.

§ He was awarded £200 a year.

In October, 1797, he published "An Experiment in Education made at the Male Asylum at Madras, suggesting a system by which a School or Family may teach itself under the superintendence of the Master or the Parent." The edition consisted of only 830 copies, and these Bell anticipated would be "a great deal more than sufficient" as "such an humble publication will produce little attention, less credit, and far less profit."*

It must not be supposed that he had a poor opinion of his system. He was as vain of it as Lancaster was of his, but the vanity of the two men was different. Lancaster's blazed like the gorse on the hill-side; Bell's glowed like an underground fire; Lancaster boasted of his "Improvements" to all the world; Bell boasted of his "Experiment" to his friends and acquaintances only. Bell wrote to his printer, "If you and I live a thousand years we shall see this system of education spread over the world," and when he visited Pestalozzi at Yverdun in 1816 he said, "In another twelve years mutual instruction will be adopted by the whole world and Pestalozzi's method will be forgotten."†

In 1801 Bell was presented to the Rectory of Swanage. This was worth over £600 a year, and carried with it the patronage of a neighbouring parish worth from £150 to £200 a year.‡

* *Bell*, II., p. 40.

† *De Guimp's Pestalozzi: tr. Russell*, p. 314. "When Pestalozzi was asked by another visitor whether it was he who had invented mutual instruction he replied, 'God forbid.' And yet 17 years before, at Stanz, he had already in his own way made use of the system."—*Ib.*

‡ The remainder of Bell's life must be briefly summarized. In 1809, that he might have leisure to promote his system, he was collated to the mastership of Sherburn Hospital, a sinecure worth about £1,200 a year and a residence; in 1818 he was given a stall in Hereford Cathedral, which he exchanged next year for one in Westminster Abbey. On the 27th of January, 1832, death ended years of perplexity respecting the disposal of his wealth which could not have fallen short of £150,000. He left a thousand pounds to Southey for writing his life, and the man who could now read through the three ponderous volumes would deserve almost as much.

CHAPTER VI.

Lancaster and Bell.

One of the 830 copies of the "Experiment" fell into the hands of Lancaster in the year 1800, and in the first edition of his "Improvements" he fully admits his indebtedness to it, saying, "I ought not to close my account without acknowledging the obligation I lie under to Dr. Bell of the Male Asylum at Madras, who so nobly gave up his time and liberal salary, that he might perfect that institution, which flourished greatly under his fostering care. He published a tract in 1798 [should be 1797] From this publication I have adopted several useful *hints*; I beg leave to recommend it to the attentive perusal of the friends of education and of youth. . . . I much regret that I was not acquainted with the beauty of his system till somewhat advanced in my plan; if I had known it, it would have saved me much trouble and some retrograde movements. As a confirmation of the goodness of Dr. Bell's plan, I have succeeded with one nearly similar in a school attended by more than 300 children."*


On the 21st of November, 1804, Lancaster wrote to Bell, detailing the difficulties with which he had had to contend, asking for any original reports of the Orphan Asylum, and "for further information on the use of the sand, whether wet or dry, and how the boys were first taught their letters."† On the 6th of December, Bell replied in the most friendly spirit, saying "I had before heard of your fame, and the progress which you had made in a new mode of tuition, and have long expected the pleasure of seeing you at Swanage. . . . I am fully sensible of the many disadvantages which you have to encounter. . . . I shall endeavour to find my original reports at Madras that I may communicate them. . . . [I could not] pretend to recite a thousand particulars which I could do *viva voce*, and which I hope to do soon in thy [?] school, which I promise myself much pleasure in attending when I am next in town."‡ Bell then stated that he was strongly urged to publish a "brief extract of" the "Experiment," and asked Lancaster to do him the favour of drawing his pen through every line which he thought might be spared, "taking care to efface whatever is not necessary to give an idea of the system of instruction." In the second edition Bell might have an opportunity of recommending Lancaster's institution, but, for this purpose, "I must see everything with my own eyes, and by hearing of your difficulties I shall best know what requisite information I omitted in the report of my system. . . . I am anxious to see your book, and still more to see yourself."§

* P. 64. † *Bell*, II., pp. 124-6. ‡ *Dunn*, p. 45. § *Id.*, p. 46.

Lancaster accepted the invitation, and at Christmas went down to Swanage, where he spent some days. Whether anything occurred during these days to make Bell change his mind respecting the second edition of the "Experiment" it is impossible to say, but instead of condensing he nearly doubled its size.* It was published at the end of April 1805, and soon afterwards, Bell, being in London, had fifty copies transmitted to Lancaster, who sent a deputation of his scholars to thank him. Bell then visited the school, where he spent an hour—and nothing else, for he emphatically refused to subscribe.†

* He increased it from 48 to 84 pages. *Fox's Vindication*, p. 24.

† *Bell*, II., pp. 129, 130 ; *Fox's Vindication*, p. 29.



CHAPTER VII.

Lancaster's Opponents.

So far the relations between the two men had been most friendly, and Lancaster might have continued to praise Bell for inventing the monitorial system, and Bell might have continued to praise Lancaster for showing the possibilities of such a system, but for the intervention of Mrs. Sarah Trimmer.

Mrs. Trimmer (1741–1810) was the daughter of John Joshua Kirby, a friend of Gainsborough, Reynolds, and Hogarth; teacher of perspective to George III., and Clerk of the Works at Kew Palace. A friendship subsisted between her and Dr. Johnson, whom she met at Reynolds' house. She married James Trimmer of Brentford, became the mother of six daughters, whom she educated entirely, and of six sons whom she helped to educate. In 1782, under the title "*An Easy Introduction to the Knowledge of Nature*," she published some of the lessons which she had been in the habit of giving her children. The great success of this encouraged her to expand the appendix into six volumes—"Sacred History selected from the Scriptures, with Annotations and Reflections suited to the Comprehension of Young Persons." In 1786 she opened Sunday schools at Brentford, and had an interview with the Queen, who wished to open similar schools at Windsor. The remainder of her life was devoted to promoting the education of the poor. Of the astonishing number of works which Mrs. Trimmer produced during this period the "*Story of the Robins*" is now alone remembered. Having written so many books on religion and education, she had come to regard herself as the special champion of both, and of the Church, which to her included both, for outside the Church she thought religion doubtful and education dangerous. A copy of the second edition of the "*Experiment*" reached her, and in it she saw the means of counteracting Lancaster's liberalism. Writing on the 24th of September 1805, to tell Dr. Bell that a notice of his work would appear in the next number of her *Guardian*,* she added—"From the time, sir, that I read Mr. Joseph Lancaster's '*Improvements in Education*' in the first edition, I conceived an idea that there was something in his plan that was inimical to the interests of the Established Church, and, when I read your '*Experiment in Education*,' to which Mr. L. referred, I plainly perceived that he had been building on your foundation," which was no great proof of perspicuity as Lancaster himself admitted the fact. She continued, "Engaged as I have long been in striving to promote the interests of the Church by the exertion of my little talents

* *The Guardian of Education* was a periodical edited by Mrs. Trimmer, which appeared during the years 1802–6.

for the instruction of the rising generation, and the prevention of the mischief that is aimed against them in various ways, I cannot see this 'Goliath of Schismatics' bearing down all before him, and engrossing the instruction of the common people, without attempting to give him a little check."*

"Goliath of Schismatics" seems a hard term to apply to a man for trying to get people who could not agree what was the right way to salvation to combine in rescuing children from what they did agree was the right way to perdition. The charitable lady who applied it sowed the seed of jealousy in a soil quite ready to receive it. Bell wrote on the 28th of September acknowledging her letter and describing Lancaster's visit to Swanage. He says, "I observed his consummate front, his importunate solicitation of subscriptions in any and every shape, his plausible and ostentatious guise, and in his third edition I think I can see something which indicates that he can now [Southey prints *cannot*] stand alone basking in the sunshine of royal countenance and popular applause."† The monitorial plan "appears to me, who am an enthusiast, so simple, so natural, so beautiful, and so true, that it must, sooner or later, have obtained a footing; and all I ever expected by my humble Essay, printed rather than published, was that it might fall into hands which would bring the system forward sooner than might otherwise happen in the course of things. J. L. has certainly contributed to this consummation. How far he has directed it to the best purposes, and whether he has intermixed much quackery, conceit, and ignorance, is another question."‡

Mrs. Trimmer replies on the 1st of October that "Of all the plans that have appeared in this kingdom likely to supplant the Church, Mr. Lancaster's seems to me the most formidable Mr. Joseph Lancaster's school is, in my estimation, a direct philanthropine,"§ which must be something even worse than Swift's parallelopipedon. She states that she is about to write a book attacking the unsectarian system and explains her tactics. She will admit that the mechanical parts are good; will gently insinuate that they are stolen from Dr. Bell, and will

* Bell, I., pp. 131-2.

† Other passages might be quoted from the correspondence illustrating Bell's bitterness. That the bitterness continued on his part was shown in February, 1807. After Mr. Whitbread had introduced his Bill, Bell and Lancaster happened to call on him within a few minutes of each other. They were shown into different rooms. "Mr. Whitbread, conceiving that the object of both gentlemen was to converse with him on their respective discoveries, went to Mr. Lancaster and asked him if he had any objection to a personal interview with Dr. Bell in his presence, that he might hear from each the peculiar merits of his system. To this Mr. Lancaster most cheerfully acceded, stating that nothing would give him greater satisfaction. Mr. Whitbread then repaired to Dr. Bell and asked him, if a suitable opportunity were to occur for him to meet Mr. Lancaster in Mr. Whitbread's company, whether the Doctor would have any objection. Which proposed interview Dr. Bell immediately declined."—*For's Vindication*, p. 36.

‡ Bell, II., p. 133.

§ *Id.*, p. 135.

prove that instruction which does not include the dogmas of the Church must be hostile to the Church. "Our friend Joseph knows very well what I have long had in my mind to do. Two years ago or more, I believe, he sent me the first edition of his 'Improvements,' which I said something about in the second volume of my *Guardian* (p. 117, I think).^{*} I heard he was very angry, and said, 'S. Trimmer was a bigot, and having set up to herself that golden image, the Church, she wanted every knee to bow down to it.' Some time after this I had an opportunity of speaking my mind pretty freely to Mrs. Priscilla Wakefield, a Quaker authoress, who told him, at my request, what I had said; and soon after I had an invitation to go to his school, which at that time consisted of about six hundred scholars, I believe.† . . .

"I will now continue my narrative concerning my personal acquaintance with Joseph Lancaster, which I left unfinished. The order of his school, as I observed before, was such as I could not but admire. He sat upon his throne, I may call it, like a king ready to receive the homage of his subjects, and in speaking to me of his boys who are distinguished by the insignia of his order of merit he actually said, 'These are my nobles.' These, however, were not the things I admired. The quietness and diligence of the whole school were what pleased me; nor could I help being diverted with the military movements of his little soldiers; for such they were in effect. Yet, upon reflection, I do not reckon this part of his plan an improvement. I took the freedom of telling him then that I thought the plan altogether not favourable to the Established Church; that I feared the boys, so educated, would be the children of habit; that they would have no fixed principle, &c. Shortly after this he marched his principal monitors down to Brentford, to pay their respects to Sarah Trimmer, and brought his young bride with him. We had some more conversation of a similar kind; but parted in a very friendly manner. However, the affair appeared of more and more importance to me as I turned it about in my mind; and I determined to address the public upon this subject, as soon as my leisure would permit; and as I wanted to see more of his school and am averse to any underhand proceedings, I told him, on paying a second visit, that I should do so; and he promised, on his part, to take no offence at whatever I might say, but said he should reply to it. Being engaged last year from spring to

^{*} It was page 171 of the *Guardian* for March, 1803.

† *Bell*, II., p. 137. Mrs. Wakefield (1751-1832) was the wife of a City merchant, and great-granddaughter of Robert Barclay, author of the "Apology" for Quakers. Like many of her sect she was distinguished for enlightened philanthropy. She was one of the first promoters of "frugality banks." To Mrs. Trimmer she was "a Quaker authoress," being widely known as a writer of children's books. "Juvenile Anecdotes founded on Facts," "The Juvenile Travellers," "An Introduction to Botany," were perhaps the most popular. Mrs. Elizabeth Fry was her niece, and I have no doubt that her husband was the Edward Wakefield so prominent in connection with the West London Lancasterian Association, about 1813.

autumn, I could not put my design into execution ; and about this time last year, on my return home from an excursion, I found a letter from J. Lancaster, taking no notice of our former conversation, but requesting my name to his list of subscribers for an enlarged edition of his plan, to which he said ‘he made no doubt I should, with pleasure, endeavour to procure more names’ ; and he sent me a short list of some very respectable ones, whom he designed as lures to me. However, I returned an answer, in which, alluding to our former conversation, I refused, in a civil way, his request ; since when I have neither seen nor heard from him, though I have been once more to his school, probably when he was gone to some, place or other to solicit subscriptions. Several of my friends who have visited the school, on asking ‘Whether he knew me?’ have been told that ‘I had a great respect for him ; but that I was too much bigoted to my own opinions’—too narrow-minded. I expect he will make me another visit, in consequence of the *Guardian* of this day ; but I am prepared for him. A few days ago, my sons, who have among their works a manufactory for tiles, received a letter from him, desiring to have some, for his new building I suppose, or rather the extension of his school in the Borough. His seal carried the impression of PEACE ! It is a curious fact that he was not originally a Quaker, but an Anabaptist, intended by his father (who is a preacher himself in this town) for what they call a minister. Whether he changed for the love of a pretty Quaker, whom he married, or whether the broad-brim was the best cover for his scheme, I cannot say ; but, certainly, in the Quaker habit (from the too liberal indulgences of our Church and State to that humbly supercilious sect), he may take liberties, and press forward to notice more than a member of the Establishment could do, even with the same degree of effrontery. I was told by one, to whom he boasted of it, that, at his first interview with his sovereign, he stood with his hat upon his head and made a long oration, while his Majesty remained condescendingly uncovered, or at least holding his hat above his head.”*

Bell’s reply is dated the 14th of October. He expresses the very sensible resolution of not entering “personally into any polemical discussion or controversial writings in defence” of his system, adding, with the most heroic mixture of metaphors, “It must rest on its own basis. I have cast my gauntlet : let them wield it who may. I know no one more equal to the task or better disposed to apply it to the useful and pious purposes to which it is fitted, than yourself. If founded, as I believe, on truth, it will last for ever.”†

Thus encouraged, Mrs. Trimmer worked with ardour, and, before the end of November, published “A Comparative View of the New Plan of Education promulgated by Mr. Joseph Lancaster, in his tracts concerning the instruction of the children of the labouring part of the community ; and of the system of

* *Bell*, II., pp. 138-140.

† *Id.*, p. 141.

Christian Education founded by our pious forefathers for the initiation of the young members of the Established Church in the principles of the Reformed Religion."

This was noticed in the *Edinburgh Review* by Sydney Smith. Respecting the two systems named in the title, he says:—"Mrs. Trimmer here contends, in opposition to Mr. Lancaster, that ever since the establishment of the Protestant Church the education of the poor has been a national concern in this country, and the only argument she produces in support of this extravagant assertion is an appeal to the Act of Uniformity. If there are millions of Englishmen who cannot spell their own names, or read a sign-post which bids them turn to the right or left, is it any answer to this deplorable ignorance to say there is an Act of Parliament for public instruction?—to show the very line and chapter where the King, Lords, and Commons, in Parliament assembled, ordained the universality of reading and writing, when, centuries afterwards, the ploughman is not more capable of the one or the other than the beast which he drives? In point of fact, there is no Protestant country in the world where the education of the poor has been so grossly and infamously neglected as in England. Mr. Lancaster has the very high merit of calling the public attention to this evil, and of calling it in the best way, by new and active remedies; and this uncandid and feeble lady, instead of using the influence she has obtained over the anility of these realms to join that useful remonstrance which Mr. Lancaster has begun, pretends to deny that the evil exists; and when you ask where are the schools, rods, pedagogues, primers, histories of Jack the Giant-killer, and all the usual apparatus for education, the only things she can produce are the Act of Uniformity and Common Prayer."*

Referring to Mrs. Trimmer's criticism of a story which Lancaster tells of swearing being put down by the public opinion of the school, Smith says:—"She begins with being cruel and ends with being silly. Her first observation is calculated to raise the posse comitatus against Mr. Lancaster—to get him stoned for impiety; and then, when he produces the most forcible example of the effect of opinion to encourage religious precept, she says such a method of preventing swearing is too rude for the Gospel. True, modest, unobtrusive religion—charitable, forgiving, indulgent Christianity—is the greatest ornament and the greatest blessing that can dwell in the mind of man. But if there be one character more base, more infamous, and more shocking than another, it is he who, for the sake of some paltry distinction in the world, is every ready to accuse conspicuous persons of irreligion—to turn common informer for the Church—and to convert the most beautiful feelings of the human heart to the destruction of the good and great, by fixing upon talents the indelible stigma of irreligion. It matters not how trifling and how insignificant the accuser; cry out that the

* Vol. IX., p. 177; *The Works of the Rev. Sydney Smith* (ed. 1851), p. 75.

Church is in danger, and your object is accomplished ; lurk in the walk of hypocrisy, to accuse your enemy of the crime of atheism, and his ruin is quite certain : acquitted or condemned, is the same thing ; it is only sufficient that he be accused, in order that his destruction be accomplished.”*

It was not very polite of Smith to call Mrs. Trimmer silly, but her objections to Lancaster’s system of rewards and punishments deserve to be so called, especially when the real objections are so perfectly obvious. “Mrs. Trimmer objects to the fear of ridicule being made an instrument of education, because it may be hereafter employed to shame a boy out of his religion. She might, for the same reason, object to the cultivation of the reasoning faculty, because a boy may hereafter be reasoned out of his religion ; she surely does not mean to say that she would make boys insensible to ridicule, the fear of which is one curb upon the follies and eccentricities of human nature. Such an object it would be impossible to effect, even if it were useful. Put a hundred boys together, and the fear of being laughed at will always be a strong influencing motive with every individual among them. If a master can turn this principle to his own use, and get boys to laugh at vice, instead of the old plan of laughing at virtue, is he not doing a very new, a very difficult, and a very laudable thing ?”†

Mrs. Trimmer objects to Lancaster’s order of merit because :—“When one considers the *humble rank* of the boys of which common *Day schools* and *Charity Schools* are composed, one is naturally led to reflect whether there is any occasion to put notions concerning the ‘*origin of nobility*’ into their heads ; especially in times which furnish recent instances of the extinction of a race of *ancient nobility* in a neighbouring nation, and the elevation of some of the lowest of the people to the highest stations. Boys, accustomed to consider themselves as the *nobles of a school*, may, in their future lives, from a conceit of their own *trivial merits*, unless they have very sound principles, aspire to be *nobles of the land*, and to take the place of the *hereditary nobility*.”‡

To this surprising objection Smith remarks : “For our part, when we saw these ragged and interesting little nobles, shining in their tin stars, we only thought it probable that the spirit of emulation would make them better ushers, tradesmen, and mechanics. We did, in truth, imagine we had observed, in some of their faces, a bold project for procuring better breeches for keeping out the blasts of heaven, which howled through those garments in every direction, and of aspiring hereafter to greater strength of seam, and more perfect continuity of cloth. But for the safety of the titled orders, we had no fear ; nor did we once dream that the black rod which whipt these dirty little dukes would one day be borne before them as the emblem of legislative dignity, and the sign of noble blood.”§

* *Sydney Smith*, p. 76. † *Id.*, p. 77. ‡ *A Comparative View*, p. 39.
§ *Sydney Smith*, p. 78.

With respect to the danger to the Church, Smith says:—“Mr. Lancaster is, as we have before observed, a Quaker. As a Quaker he says, ‘I cannot teach your creeds; but I pledge myself not to teach my own. I pledge myself (and if I deceive you, desert me and give me up) to confine myself to those points of Christianity in which all Christians agree.’ To which Mrs. Trimmer replies, that, in the first place, he cannot do this; and, in the next place, if he did do it, it would not be enough. But why, we would ask, cannot Mr. Lancaster effect his first object? The practical and the feeling parts of religion are much more likely to attract the attention and provoke the questions of children than its speculative doctrines. A child is not very likely to put any questions at all to a catechising master, and still less likely to lead him into subtle and profound disquisition. It appears to us not only practicable, but very easy, to confine the religious instruction of the poor, in the first years of life, to those general feelings and principles, which are suitable to the Established Church and to every sect; afterwards, the discriminating tenets of each subdivision of Christians may be fixed upon this general basis. To say that this is not enough—that a child should be made an Antisocialian or an Antipelagian, in his tenderest years, may be very just; but what prevents you from making him so? Mr. Lancaster, purposely and intentionally, to allay all jealousy, leaves him in a state as well adapted for one creed as another. Begin; make your pupil a firm advocate for the peculiar doctrines of the English Church; dig round about him, on every side, a trench that shall guard him from every species of heresy. In spite of all this clamour you do nothing; you do not stir a single step; you educate alike the swineherd and his hog; and then, when a man of real genius and enterprise rises up and says, ‘Let me dedicate my life to this neglected object—I will do everything but that which must necessarily devolve upon you alone’—you refuse to do your little, and compel him by the cry of Infidel and Atheist, to leave you to your ancient repose, and not to drive you by insidious comparisons, to any system of active utility. We deny, again and again, that Mr. Lancaster’s instruction is any kind of impediment to the propagation of the doctrines of the Church; and if Mr. Lancaster were to perish with his system to-morrow, these boys would positively be taught nothing; the doctrines which Mrs. Trimmer considers to be prohibited would not rush in, but there would be an absolute vacuum.”*

The publication of “A Comparative View” was the first overt act in a war which lasted as long as the siege of Troy. The Church party were the assailants; their weapons were sermons, “charges,” pamphlets, articles, and letters in the *Quarterly* and *Anti Jacobin Reviews*, the *Orthodox Churchman’s Magazine*, the *British Critic*, the *Morning Post*, and other

* *Sydney Smith*, p. 78. The King was so pleased with this review that he made Sir Herbert Taylor, his secretary, read it to him twice.

Tory publications ; and their tactics the flank attacks suggested by Mrs. Trimmer. These were prosecuted with all the more vigour as Lancaster was entrenched behind the Royal patronage, and the attempts to dislodge him had grievously failed. On the 1st of January 1806, Mrs. Trimmer, writing to Bell, says she hears that Lancaster is "exceedingly elated by his surprising success with the Royal Family," but she has "reason to think that there is a *caution* in that quarter."* Desperate efforts were made to influence the King through the Queen ;† but those who tried to move George III. soon discovered that they might as well try to move the Rock of Gibraltar. The *Edinburgh Review* says‡ :— "It was proposed to wean the Sovereign from his unfortunate predilection in favour of those who wished to diffuse on the cheapest terms the most useful kinds of knowledge among his poorer subjects. . . . To work upon the fears of him who never knew what fear was seemed to them. . . . the best mode of accomplishing their object. . . . They took every means to magnify the dangers which must result from His Majesty continuing to patronise a sectary who taught reading, and put the Bible into children's hands without the safeguards of proper gloss and commentary and a regular assortment of articles." The King only answered : "The man is a Dissenter, but that has nothing to do with his plans."§

The pretensions of the rival systems to priority are soon settled. It is beyond doubt that the idea of monitors occurred independently to Bell and to Lancaster ; it is beyond doubt that it occurred to Bell first ; but, as it is also beyond doubt that the idea had occurred to others before Bell was born, his priority is not worth much. Hamel contends that monitors had been recommended, described, or used by Lyeurgus, Quintilian,|| Pietro della Valle (a traveller who saw them in India in 1623), M. Herbault (who employed them in Paris in 1747), and the

* *Bell*, II., p. 152.

† "Among those whose interference contributed to undeceive the King was the truly amiable De Luc. When this veteran philosopher honoured Cornwall with a visit, I had more than one conversation with him relative to Lancaster. De Luc was reader, if I recollect rightly, to Her Majesty, and he told me that, taking advantage of his situation, he had frequently introduced to Their Majesties the subject of Lancaster's school and cautioned them (he hoped with good effect) against the sly insinuations of a person whose speciousness had deceived many in high places—such was De Luc's expression : and he was fearful that the patronage of Lancaster would become fashionable."—*Pochele's Edition of Bishop Lavington's Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compared* (1833), ccxxxiv.

Jean André De Luc (1727–1817), a native of Geneva, settled in England in 1773. He was a distinguished geologist and F.R.S., and "reader" to Queen Charlotte.

‡ Vol. XI. (November, 1811), p. 22.

§ *Fox's Vindication*, p. 61.

|| To state that Lyeurgus and Quintilian recommend the use of monitors is to go rather beyond the text. They simply point out that emulation between fellow-pupils is more effective than the imitation of the master by the pupils. See Plutarch's *Life of Lyeurgus*, and Quintilian, *Instit Orat.*, Bk. I., cap. ii., 26.

Chevalier Paulet (who employed them in the same city in 1772). He might have added Comenius and Pestalozzi.*

We need not trouble ourselves with the details of the controversy about the comparative merits of the rival systems, especially as neither had much intrinsic value. The differences between them are of no more practical concern now than the differences between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. That the judicial impartiality which is easy to us was possible amid the dust and din of the conflict is proved by Sir Thomas Bernard, who says,† “Upon the subject of the comparative merits of Dr. Bell and Mr. Lancaster a *war of words* has been waged by their adherents, like most other wars, without cause on either side. . . . Some of my readers may prefer one and some the other of the two schools. I shall be most happy if half the ignorant poor of this kingdom should have the benefit of one mode and the other half of the other.” Robert Owen speaks with the same impartiality. He says: “The names of Bell and Lancaster can never be separated in history, and shall the partially-informed, though well meaning, of their respective partisans persevere in separating them in their lives?”‡

Of the attacks on Lancaster’s unsectarianism a very few specimens will suffice. The Rev. Charles Daubeney, Archdeacon of Sarum, in a charge to his clergy, said Lancaster’s plan “will ultimately lead to general infidelity. . . . If this be liberality, my brethren, it is liberality at the expense of Christianity, of approved experience, and even of common sense. . . . The evil to be apprehended from the public support of a system which professedly rejects the Established religion is the destruction of all religion.”

The Archdeacon renewed his attack in a sermon at St. Paul’s. He warned his hearers to be on their guard against “the projected improvements in the education of the poor.” He described Lancaster as one who in those “days of rebuke and blasphemy” had become the author of “a deceitful institution, the whole secret of which for the *purpose* of neutralising the effect of all established opinions” consisted in “the rejection of all peculiar tenets,” and the adoption of “a kind of *philosophical deism*,”—an institution “which called to mind the crafty design of the

* “Comenius admits that the teacher of one hundred boys could not personally ascertain whether all did and understood their work; but, by arranging them in tens and putting one of the boys . . . over each troop of ten, he might check their exercises and report to the master. The troops of ten he called *Decurie* and their captains *Decuriones*.”—*Laurie’s John Amos Comenius*, p. 99. An earlier writer, Sturm, advocated the employment of certain pupils for a definite purpose. He recommended that each class should be questioned by the top pupil of the class above. Charles Hoole (1660) recommends them, and Prof. Foster Watson in an article on Hoole (*Chicago School Review*, Oct. 1901, p. 531) quotes Thomas Popeson’s Ordinance (1592) to Bungay School—“Some of the hygest forme shall weekly by course instruct the first forme both in their accidence and also in giving them copies to write.”

† *The New School*, p. 102.

‡ *A New View of Society*.

apostate Julian to confound Christianity by encouraging dissension." The "Archdeceiver" himself had an interest in the new system, inasmuch as this "industrious promoter of heresy would not fail to turn it to the promotion of infidelity."*

The Very Rev. Dr. Wordsworth, Dean of Boeking, said "Liberty of conscience to Dissenters" can only be compared to "the drawing all the teeth out of the heads of the Establishment, and cutting their nails close to the quick."† In complete harmony with this sentiment is the description of Quakerism as "a disgusting amalgam of anti-Christian heresies and blasphemies."

After this it seems hardly necessary to quote from a sermon against the system preached by Professor Marsh‡ in St. Paul's, or the charge against it delivered by the Rev. R. G. Bowyer to the clergy of the officiality of the Dean and Chapter of Durham.

Southey sums up the opinion of his party in the *Quarterly Review*§ when he says: "The school and Church establishment ought . . . to be intimately connected; the parish priest should be the superintendent of the parish school, and when a race of men have been educated for the purpose, it would be well if the clerk were always the schoolmaster." Southey's aspiration of making the parish clerk the schoolmaster was not realised; we seem to have come much nearer making the schoolmaster the parish clerk.

It is not necessary to go on illustrating the attack made by Lancaster's opponents on his unsectarianism; the nature of it may be readily guessed by a generation that has seen the attack made by their successors on the religious instruction given in Board Schools.

* Quoted in the *Edinburgh Review*, vol. XVII., p. 33.

† Quoted in *Fox's Vindication*, p. 81.

‡ Herbert Marsh (1757-1839), afterwards Bishop of Llandaff and Peterborough, whose violence as a controversialist was hardly exceeded by his extraordinary ability and learning.

§ October 1811, p. 303.



CHAPTER VIII.

The Royal Lancasterian Institution.

Lancaster had one enemy more powerful than priests or professors, deacons or archdeacons, deans or doctors, reviewers or pamphleteers, and that was Lancaster himself. They impeded the spread of the system, he ruined the man. His recklessness, his extravagance, and his ostentation almost pass belief. In 1804, with a subscription of barely £600, he built a new school* to accommodate a thousand children. And, as if this were not sufficient, he started a girls' school in the same place next year† and made himself personally responsible for several schools elsewhere. He set up a manufactory for slates and a printing office, neither of which ever paid its expenses. Teachers being needed for schools on his plan he established what we should now call a Training College, the students being his oldest and best monitors; but instead of asking them to pay fees, he gave them free education, and, in addition, undertook to board, lodge, and clothe them. As if this, again, were not sufficient, he established a college for country teachers at Maiden Bradley, in Somerset.‡ He treated his pupils—and himself—with what would have been deemed profusion in a man of wealth. In 1807, at the very time when, according to Hamel§ he had left London to escape his creditors, he wrote to Corston: "The day after to-morrow is my birthday . . . I wish all my children [that is all his pupils] to have a plumb [*sic*] pudding and roast beef. Do order it for them and spend an happy hour in the evening with them as thou didst this time last year in my absence in Ireland; furnish them with money and when the Good Samaritan comes again he will repay thee."¶

Francis Place, the Radical tailor of Charing Cross, says Lancaster "sometimes kept one and sometimes two carriages. He seldom went from home but in a carriage, and generally had some of his lads in one or two post-chaises following him, and, as if to waste his time, indulge his love of ostentation, and squander the money of other people, he used to take excursions in the manner described to some distance, dine sumptuously, and of course, expensively, and return in the evening. Sometimes these excursions occupied two or three days."¶

Robert Dale Owen says that the first public appearance of his father (Robert Owen, the Socialist) "as a speaker was as

* In Belvedere Place, Borough Road, on a site now appropriately occupied by a Board School.

† *Report of the Rise and Progress of the School for Girls*, p. 1.

‡ *Progress*, p. 13. The place was doubtless chosen through the influence of the Duke of Somerset, whose home was at Maiden Bradley.

§ P. 20.

¶ *Corston*, p. 42.

¶ Quoted in the *Life of Francis Place*, by Graham Wallas, p. 94.

president at a public dinner given in the city of Glasgow in 1812 to Joseph Lancaster, the well-known educational reformer. In the character of this gentleman, a Quaker, there was a strange mixture of honest self-sacrificing zeal and imprudent self-indulgent ostentation When his system finally attracted attention and subscriptions poured in upon him, prosperity called forth weaknesses and he squandered money given for other purposes. I recollect when he drove up one afternoon on the invitation of my father to Braxfield House [New Lanark] with four horses to his post-chaise, an extravagance in which I never knew my father to indulge. When, somewhat later, my father gave him five thousand dollars [£1,000] to aid in the general introduction of Lancaster's system of instruction, I remember my mother, adverting to the four horses, demurred to the wisdom of so munificent a subscription. And I think that in view of Lancaster's prodigality she was in the right."*

We have seen that in 1807 Lancaster had left London to avoid his creditors, but his system was always with him. He gave eight lectures on it while in exile, and succeeded in establishing eight schools for fifteen hundred children. Returning to town about the end of May he was arrested and taken to a spunging house near Rowland Hill's Chapel, whence he wrote to Corston. Corston says, "The idea of becoming bail for a man who was liable, the moment he was at liberty, to be arrested from numerous quarters, and thus ruining myself and involving my wife and family in trouble, completely overwhelmed me." After a severe mental struggle he resolved that he could not give material assistance. He therefore called and explained his position to the captive. Corston continues: "I stayed an hour or two with him. After my departure he rang for the sheriff's officer, to take him to the Bench; but obtained leave to call at home on their way thither.† When he got home, his wife and child, and all his young monitors, were assembled, overwhelmed with grief because he was going to prison. After being with them a little, he opened the parlour door, and said to the man, 'Friend, when I am at home I read the Scriptures to my family; hast thou any objection to come in?' He replied, 'No, sir,' and went in. After he had read a chapter or two, he went to prayer. The man soon became deeply affected, and joined the common grief. After prayer the man returned into the other room, and Joseph in a few minutes said to him, 'Now, friend, I am ready for thee.' They had not gone many paces from the door, when the man said 'Sir, have you got no friend to be bound for you for this debt?' Joseph replied, 'No, I have tried them all.' 'Well,' replied the man, 'then I'll be bound for you myself, for you are an honest man, I know.' He surrendered him at the King's Bench and they took his security for the debt."‡

* *Threading My Way*, p. 76. See p. 66 post.

† The school in Belvedere Place stood close to the King's Bench Prison.

‡ *Corston*, pp. 35-36.

In the November after his release Lancaster made another friend as faithful and as useful as Corston. This was Joseph Fox, who in the words of his epitaph was "eminent as a member of the medical profession, more eminent for his extensive and diversified benevolence, but most eminent for his signal, unceasing, unabated, and important labours as honorary secretary of the British and Foreign School Society."* Southey sneeringly called him a dentist, and hopes that he "manages his key-instrument more skilfully than his pen, and that he does not sometimes take hold of the wrong tooth as well as of the wrong argument."†

Fox was a surgeon-dentist of Guy's Hospital, and had a fashionable private practice; he was the author of a work on the Natural History of Diseases of the Teeth, and he helped to found the Jenner Society, which awarded him a gold medal for his zealous efforts to promote vaccination.† Fox, happening to be at Dover regaining strength after a severe illness, went to hear Lancaster lecture. He was so moved that at the end of the discourse he rose and declared: "Were I to hold my peace after what I have now heard and experienced, the stones might cry out against me."

As soon as Lancaster and Fox had both returned to London, Lancaster brought Fox and Corston together. Corston describes the meeting. He says:—"It was arranged for Joseph and Mr. Fox to dine at my house. They accordingly came. This was the first time I saw Mr. Fox, and a memorable occasion it proved. He knew that Joseph was involved, but did not know to what amount. Their meeting together was truly affecting. They embraced each other like children. 'Ah,' thought I, as we ascended the stairs together, 'God has sent you to our assistance.'

* Fox was born on the 7th of November 1775 and died on the 11th of April 1816.—*Hamel*, p. 221. *Corston*, p. 87.—Referring to the death of Fox, the Report of the British and Foreign School Society for 1816 says:—

"Ever since the year 1808 when Mr. Fox, with a generosity and pious confidence to which few parallels will be found in the history of philanthropy, rescued this Institution and the valuable system which it is intended to propagate from impending ruin by advancing a very considerable sum of money and also becoming responsible for the extensive engagements into which the founder had entered and which he was incapable of discharging, he has, with a cheerful sacrifice of his time, his talents, and his property, and often under the most discouraging circumstances, and in opposition to the most powerful obstacles, fulfilled the laborious duties of secretary. Undismayed by the complicated difficulties with which this cause has had to struggle, and deriving a confident hope of its final success from his firm conviction of its intrinsic excellence, he, with equal assiduity and disinterestedness, became its public champion and its unassuming servant. Nor did his ardour abate towards the painful close of his useful life; almost the last efforts of a constitution apparently impaired by too long continued exertion in his labours for this Society were devoted to its service: he felt that his day's work was accomplished and was enabled to look forward towards approaching dissolution with characteristic serenity. The review of his labours in this great cause afford him solid satisfaction and peace and he expressed thankfulness that he had been permitted to live to see the work in a fair way to be permanently established."

† *Quarterly Review*, Vol. VI. (October, 1811), p. 295.

After dinner our first subject was the debt. 'Well, Joseph,' said Mr. Fox, 'what do you owe now? Do you owe a thousand pounds?' He only replied 'Yes.' After a little time he asked 'Do you owe two thousand pounds?' A significant pause ensued. Joseph again replied 'Yes.' The third time he enquired with increased earnestness, affectionately tapping him on the shoulder, 'Do you owe three thousand pounds?' Joseph burst into tears. 'You must ask William Corston,' said he; 'he knows better what I owe than I do myself.' Mr. Fox, then rising from his seat and addressing me solemnly, said 'Sir, I am come to London to see the devil in his worst shape; tell me what he owes.' 'Why, sir,' I replied, 'it is nearer four thousand than three.' He returned to his chair, and seemed for some time to be absorbed in prayer—not a word passed from either of us. Mr. Fox at length rose and addressing me said: 'Sir, I can do it with your assistance.' I replied, 'I know, sir, that God has sent you to help us, and all that I can do is at your command.' He rejoined, 'I can only at present lay my hand upon two thousand pounds. Will you accept all the bills I draw upon you? and every one shall have twenty shillings in the pound, and interest, if they require it.' I replied, 'I will.' We then all instantly rose, and embraced each other like children, shedding tears of affection and joy. 'The cause is saved,' exclaimed Mr. Fox. I replied 'Yes, and a threefold cord is not easily broke.' Thus, through the gracious and almighty hand of Him Who prospers His own cause and makes it to triumph over all its enemies and obstacles—thus was the foundation laid for the maintenance of an institution which was destined to confer the blessing of Christian education upon millions and millions of mankind."*

The institution to which Corston refers is, of course, the British and Foreign School Society, and the resolution forming the Committee which grew into the Society is so deeply interesting that it must be quoted in full:—

"London, January 22nd, 1808.

"At a meeting held at Mr. William Corston's, No. 30, Ludgate Street†—Present: Messrs. William Corston, Joseph Fox, and Joseph Lancaster—it was unanimously resolved, 'That, with a humble reliance upon the blessing of Lord God Almighty and with a single eye to His glory; and with a view to benefit the British Empire; the persons present do constitute themselves a Society for the purpose of affording education, procuring employment, and, as far as possible, to furnish clothing to the children of the poorer subjects of King George III.; and also to diffuse the providential discovery of the vaccine inoculation in order that at the same time they may be instrumental in the hands of Providence to preserve life from loathsome disease; and also, by furnishing objects for the exercise of industry, to render life useful.

* *Corston*, pp. 54, 55.

† *Street* and *Hill* appear indifferently in the Minutes and Reports.

“ ‘That in order to prevent any impediment to the prosecution of this grand design, the persons present do constitute themselves Managers of this Society, to plan, prepare, and direct all its future operations ; and that no business shall be brought before any meeting of subscribers who may probably come forward in aid of this Society but what has been recommended by this Committee of Managers.’ ”

The influence of each of the enthusiasts may be clearly traced in this resolution, and the simple faith in which three men, none wealthy, one deep in debt, and all belonging to unfashionable sects* combined themselves into a society to confer a threefold blessing upon the British Empire is nothing less than sublime.†

Corston continues his narrative : “ We immediately, and with renewed energy, proceeded with the work. Two days after, the bills, forty-four in number, were drawn, accepted, and given to the creditors : and, with gratitude to the Divine goodness, it may be added that they were all honoured as they became due.”‡

On the 29th of July, William Allen§ of Plough Court, and Joseph Foster, of Bromley, were added to the Committee. Allen alone was worth a thousand common men. By profession he was lecturer on chemistry at Guy’s Hospital ; in religion he was a Quaker. His position in the world of science was eminent, in the world of philanthropy pre-eminent. His ability, his shrewdness, and his business habits made him a valuable member of any Committee, whilst his intense enthusiasm and the transparent purity of his motives gave him a power which princes and

* Corston was a Moravian, and Fox a Baptist.

† It may be as well to state that nothing more is heard of straw plat or vaccination.

‡ *Corston*, p. 55.

§ The names of Allen and his father-in-law still survive in the firm of Allen and Hanbury, of Plough Court, Lombard Street. In the course of the evidence which William Allen gave on the 3rd of June 1816, before the Select Committee on the Education of the Lower Orders in the Metropolis, he said : “ About the middle of the year 1808 I became first acquainted with the benevolent exertions of my late friend Joseph Fox ; previous to that period I had merely paid my annual subscription to the Borough Road School, conducted by Joseph Lancaster, but had never attended particularly to the subject : when informed of the interest taken in the concern by Joseph Fox I enquired more minutely into the nature of the establishment and visited it myself. I saw that it was an institution pregnant with the greatest benefits not only to this country but to the whole world : I saw a system in action capable of affording instruction to poor children at the expense of from five to fifteen shillings per head per annum, according to the magnitude of the school I was particularly struck with the liberality upon which the system was conducted, for, while the reading lessons consisted of extracts from the Scriptures in the very words of the authorised version, no peculiar catechism or creed was forced upon the children thus promiscuously collected together, and who must obviously consist of those belonging to persons of different religious persuasions : and I could not but perceive at the same time the immense advantages which would arise to the community by thus educating children of different religious persuasions together, inasmuch as it would tend to lessen those prejudices and animosities which often have been found so mischievous in society.”—*Second Report of the Select Committee*, p. 115.

ministers might envy. He was a friend, and strange as it may seem, a benefactor of Queen Victoria's father, the Duke of Kent ; he was able to render service to the Duke of Wellington ; and his acquaintance with foreign Sovereigns was extensive ; the Czar actually visited a Quakers' meeting through interest in this individual Quaker ; and Allen's world-wide philanthropic connections made the "Foreign" in the title of the British and Foreign School Society no idle flourish. To the end of his long life, in 1843, he was the Treasurer of the Society, but, with or without office, he must have been its guiding spirit and moving force.

Allen was present at the meeting when he was appointed, and joined in resolving : "That the following statement be entered on the Minutes as the basis of all future proceedings of the Committee :—

" "Upon an investigation of Joseph Lancaster's affairs it appears that in bringing his system of education for poor children to its present state of perfection he has had through a long course of years to struggle with considerable difficulties for want of a capital ; that these difficulties have produced a degree of embarrassment which not only tends to cramp his useful exertions but is in danger of suspending them entirely if not speedily removed.

" "It appears that the whole amount of his debts is £6,449, and his property taken at a low estimate only £3,500 ; yet, if liberally supported, there is a fair prospect of his being able to retrieve his affairs in no very long period from the profits of his printing office,* and other sources : he appears to have the *materials* for producing a considerable profit from his establishment, but they will be wholly useless without a sufficient capital.

" "It appears that the care necessary to the keeping up, perfecting, and diffusing the benefits of Joseph Lancaster's system will for some time require his undivided attention. The following persons therefore, under a full conviction of the incalculable benefits which not only this country but the civilised world may derive from the measures in question, agree to act as a Committee for managing Joseph Lancaster's financial concerns, as far as relates to a loan of capital proposed to be raised by subscription in shares of £100 each ; namely :—

John Jackson, M.P.

Joseph Foster.

William Corston.

Joseph Fox."†

William Allen.

These noble patriots were united by a common friendship for Lancaster, a common desire to promote popular education,

* A resolution providing for what should be done *when* there were any profits shows that there were none then ; and a subsequent resolution mentions a visit from "Taylor, the printer," who found the place grossly mismanaged. (Taylor was doubtless Richard or Arthur Taylor, of Printer's Court, Shoe Lane, who printed vols. II.—VII. of the *Philanthropist*.)

† Minutes, 29 July 1808 ; Thomas Sturge was added a week later.

The King had done for himself and was
not concerned by the allegations of others.
The Duke of Cornwall visited the school
and reported to the King so must we
if ever as completely corroborated his
own views - The Duke of Kent within
last week has done the same -
and promised to make a similar
report. My efforts cannot persuade
the Royal Family and is the evidence
of their own senses - with the
debarment of the King the support
for the monarchy and the blessing of
Providence on my sincere and energetic
actions. I feel like to see the
Day that from one extremity of
this Empire to another an ignorant
child shall be as rare as a unicorn
and be either looked upon as a
Lunar Calves or not to be found at
all

I enclose a paragraph which if
then will do me the honor to use
on the tomorrow or the next day will
be of great service. My plans and
certain lectures

I remain

thy obliged friend

T. Perry Esq

to Lancaster

REDUCED FACSIMILE OF PART OF A LETTER

dated "11th mo. 22nd 1809," from Lancaster to Perry, the Editor of the "Morning Chronicle," informing him that Lancaster is "about to recommence his lectures in London."

and a common belief in his system as the best means. They freely sacrificed their time and money for the sake of the man, but, even for his sake, they would not sacrifice the system. They saved it from the bigotry and blindness of its opponents, and, if the need arose, they would save it from the folly and caprice of the inventor. Bentham draws a clear distinction between their attitude and Lancaster's towards it: "Lancaster . . . saw in it an instrument of that reputation, that opulence, and that power which he actually attained, and so notorious and scandalously abused. His supporters, his generous and public-spirited supporters, saw in it those admirable capacities which it possesses, and pushed on the application to the utmost of their power."*

Their chief difficulty was Lancaster himself. Allen, writing to Foster, says: "I was convinced before I engaged in the business that the prudent management of J. L. was the first and great object: if this is happily accomplished there is no doubt but that everything else will naturally follow, and the cause, in every point of view, is of so much importance that it is well worth no common degree of pains and attention; but we must be firm in prosecuting our views of what appears to us right, and, at the same time, treat him as tenderly as possible. We have a delicate subject to handle, but I trust that the sincerity of our intentions will in time be blessed. I have written to Lancaster by this post."†

Lancaster was suspicious of those prudent business rules without which no undertaking can prosper, and jealous lest the disinterested friends striving so strenuously to assist him should rob him of his glory. Allen tried to allay his fears: "Be assured, my dear friend," he wrote, "that neither myself nor any of the Committee wish to interfere further than appears absolutely necessary for the attainment of the object thou art so laudably pursuing We entered into it merely from a sense of its importance, and to assist a meritorious individual; and not from any little feeling of vanity in being known to patronise a work of general utility. I believe that thou wilt always find us superior to feelings of this kind; and, indeed, if we had possessed them, they would not have been a sufficient inducement to undertake such a load as this."‡

During a considerable part of the three years following the formation of the Committee, while the members were labouring to place the institution on a firm foundation, and to disentangle the affairs of its founder, Lancaster was propagandising throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland. During 1808-10 he made sixteen missionary journeys, travelled 6,837 miles, delivered 141 lectures, and was instrumental in establishing 95 schools, for 25,500 children. (*Progress*, 1811, pp. 14, 15.)

* Quoted in Bain's *Life of James Mill*, p. 85.

† Allen, I., p. 99.

‡ *Id.*, p. 98.

Meanwhile the Committee was taking steps to diminish the expenditure. The Maiden Bradley College was closed, all schools except the central were detached and left to the care of their localities, the printing office and the slate manufactory were abandoned, and every department in the Borough Road was overhauled.* But no reduction could efface the adverse balance while the success of Lancaster's lectures and the circulation of his publications brought a constantly-growing demand for trained teachers.

On the 16th of July 1810, therefore, the Committee resolved that it was "essentially necessary to procure a more extensive co-operation from benevolent persons . . . in order that a sufficient sum may be raised to relieve the members of this Committee from the unequal pressure which they have so long sustained in supporting this great public work, and to place the establishment upon a permanent footing."†

After much fatigue on the part of Allen and Fox, the purpose was effected. A semi-public meeting was held in the Thatched House Tavern on the 14th of December, 1810. Brougham explained the business, and a resolution was passed "That it appears to this meeting of great importance to second the efforts of Joseph Lancaster's Committee in promoting the general education of the poor upon his plan, and the gentlemen now present agree to act as a Committee for the purpose of raising the necessary funds for accomplishing this great object." The enlarged Committee included the Duke of Bedford, Lord Somerville, Lord Ebrington, the Earl of Mordaunt, Brougham, Whitbread, Wilberforce, Romilly, five other members of Parliament, one baronet, two "honourables," Buxton, Samuel Gurney, Clarkson, James Mill, Samuel Rogers, Gurney Barclay, Joseph Fry, and nearly two dozen more men of standing. (*Minutes*, 17 December 1810.)

From a report drawn up by this Committee it appeared that Lancaster's debts at the end of 1810 exceeded his assets by £4,914 0s. 9d.,‡ and that "in addition to the necessary advances which had been made to defray the original debts," the Trustees had "advanced from time to time sums of money to make up the deficiencies of subscriptions to the amount of £5,772 4s. 0d.§"

The report was presented to "a public meeting of the friends and supporters of the Royal Lancasterian System of Education"|| held at the Freemasons' Tavern on the 11th of May, 1811. Several

* It must not be supposed that the whole of this business was necessarily completed during the three years under notice.

† *Minutes*.

‡ *Minutes*, 21 January 1811.

§ Report for 1810, p. 25.

|| Till 1813 they had no code of rules and no fixed name. In the heading of the Report for the year 1810 the Committee is called "the Committee of the Institution for promoting the Royal Lancasterian System for the Education of the Poor"; in the heading of the Report for 1811 it is called "the Committee of the Royal Lancasterian Institution for the Education of the Poor"; and the popular name was "the Royal Lancasterian Institution."

of the sons of George III. manifested a deep interest in the progress of the system, and visited the central school repeatedly. Throughout the tedious and delicate discussions which preceded the final severance between Lancaster and the Committee, the Duke of Kent took a leading part; no important step was taken without his previous approval; and critical meetings were held under his presidency in Kensington Palace. On the morning of the first public meeting he, accompanied by his brother, the Duke of Sussex, Lord Erskine, and (in the words of the long-dead reporter) "a number of very respectable gentlemen," inspected the progress of the children, and then marched in a body to the place of meeting, where a large company was already assembled, under the presidency of the Duke of Bedford. Lancaster read a long history of his progress from the year 1798. He "stated that a considerable damp had been thrown upon his undertaking by a malicious report that the King had withdrawn his patronage. Here the Duke of Kent stopped Mr. Lancaster, apologising for the interruption, but he felt it to be his duty to declare that there was not the smallest ground for such a report and he would further say that he was assured that so long as Mr. Lancaster persevered in his present course, abstaining from party views and party subjects, His Majesty would never withdraw his countenance from him."*

Some little time before the meeting the Prince Regent had granted Lancaster an interview, and as a result, William Adam, his Chancellor, attended to announce the doubling of the Prince's subscription of £50. At the "first anniversary dinner," which was held on the 17th of May, Adam attended again to announce that the Prince would subscribe 200 guineas to the building fund, and 100 guineas towards the reduction of the debt. Furthermore, he would permit Lancaster to dedicate to him "the History of the Royal British System of Education," and take thirty copies at £1 each.†

The Report for the year 1811 begins as follows:—"The success of the Lancasterian plans for the instruction of the common people in the arts of reading, writing, and arithmetic has now become so conspicuous as to have produced during the

* *Philanthropist*, I., p. 377.

† *Id.*, p. 385. The book was never written. Lancaster declared that he intended writing it to provide for his infant daughter.

For the dinner Isaac Brandon wrote a poem called "Instruction." I quote a few lines as a "taste of its quality":—

"INSTRUCTION! bending o'er thy groups proclaim
The school's first patrons bore each royal name . . .
With cherish'd knowledge, grateful love, instil
The names of BEDFORD and of SOMERVILLE . . .
Th' enlightened KENT, excited at her [Freedom's] shrine
Spreads quick instruction thro' each martial line . . .
Of nature mild, in nought but virtue bold,
And form'd in Charity's completest mould,
To rear the good the summit of his fame,
His home the SCHOOL, and LANCASTER his name."

last year events of no common magnitude. The experimental proof that these advantages were about to be diffused to the whole of the rising generation by the new and powerful efficacy of this economical and expeditious method of instruction has aroused both the friends and the foes of national education.

"The exertions to which this general impulse has given birth have undoubtedly been favourable to the cause, and afford to its friends occasion of congratulation and joy. But, as in all human proceedings good is commonly mixed with evil, we recognise here, also, certain circumstances which by their nature are calculated to obstruct rather than forward the progress of this salutary work.

"A sentiment of division and sectarian exclusion has been introduced into that which ought to be as common as the roads on which our food is conveyed, and which ought to cement, not disunite, the hearts of the people. In the establishment of schools for different sects, a new and extraordinary source of disunion, a new and extraordinary source of expense, is opened, an expense which in many districts cannot be afforded, and which is fraught with ruin to the design."

The event specially alluded to is the establishment, in October, 1811, of the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church throughout England and Wales. This Society united those respectable people who believed that schools directed by the clergy would be beneficial to the country, but that unsectarian schools would be a little worse, or only a little better, than no schools at all, with the opponents of Lancaster, who soon saw that, in most places, the opening of a denominational was the most certain method of preventing the opening of an undenominational school. In Dr. Bell they had an instrument ready to hand. He was accordingly given various positions of dignity in which the emoluments were large and the duties small, that he might devote his energies to the organising of schools on his plan, and the training of the teachers required. That the establishment of the National Society was stimulated by opposition to Lancaster there can be no question. A caricature of the day represented the rival system-mongers as Bel and the Dragon, and Southey states that the heads of the Church did their duty not because they were persuaded to it, but because they were "frightened and shamed into it by the Dragon."* Elsewhere, speaking of Lancaster, Southey says: "The good he has done is very great, but it is very much in the way that the devil has been the cause of redemption."†

The Report for the year 1811 was presented at the Freemasons' Tavern on the 9th of May, 1812, when the Duke of Kent presided, and the Duke of Sussex moved a resolution affirming that "a system of instruction fully applicable to

* *Dunn*, p. 51.

† *Southey's Letters*, II., p. 255.

national education must not only be economical and expeditious, but also be founded on those principles of universal toleration whereby no sect or denomination of religious professors is excluded from the acquisition of knowledge through the forced introduction of any particular creed or formulary."

At a dinner a week later Braham, the great tenor, "delivered in a sort of musical recitative, with a sublime effect,"* an ode written for the occasion by James Montgomery. This poem, after describing the light of knowledge, proceeded :—

“Hail to the glorious plan ! that spread
This light with universal beams,
And through the human desert led
Truth’s living, pure, perpetual streams.”

* *Philanthropist*, II., p. 300.



CHAPTER IX.

The British and Foreign School Society.

The institution in the Borough Road had passed through several well-marked stages of development. At first it had been an ordinary private adventure school, differing from other private adventure schools in nothing except the magnetism of its master; then it had attracted public attention and public support as an embodiment of new ideas in education; then half a dozen friends impressed by the value of those ideas, had endeavoured to extricate the innovator from the difficulties into which his own unrestrained enthusiasm had plunged him; and then, when the ever-widening acceptance of the ideas made the task too great, they had bespoken the aid of a larger Committee.

In all the stages the institution had been Lancaster's own, and the debts had been his own, though since 1808 other people had tried to pay them. This was a most unsatisfactory arrangement. The Committee felt that the money subscribed by the public was subscribed for the promotion of popular education, and should be spent for no other purpose; Lancaster thought that the money was subscribed for him, and that it was the privilege of the Committee to increase his income, but neither its privilege nor its right to regulate his expenditure. The strain of the arrangement, which was great while his activities centred around the institution, reached breaking point when he embarked on a rash speculation that had nothing to do with the institution. The failure of this enterprise (and the members of the Committee, with their dearly-bought knowledge of him, could predict its failure with certainty) would leave him insolvent, so if the property in the Borough Road were still in his name nothing could save it from the grasp of his creditors, and nothing could prevent the ruin of the institution.

On the 6th of July, 1812, Allen notes in his diary, "J. Lancaster has taken Salvador House, at Tooting; we must now come to an understanding as to his public and private concerns."* This entry receives a full explanation next month in a long letter written by Allen from Hastings to Richard Reynolds of Bristol,† often an anonymous donor of large sums to the Committee:—"We were some time ago much surprised to hear that J. Lancaster had taken Salvador House, at Tooting, without consulting any of his friends; we, of course, took an early opportunity to come to an explanation, when he candidly informed us that he considered this undertaking as perfectly distinct from his public work, that if it had been at all connected

* *Allen*, I., p. 149.

† For an account of this munificent man and for verses to his memory see "*The Poetical Works of James Montgomery*" (London, 1854), p. 254.

with it he would not have failed to ask our advice, but that as he had been giving up the best part of his life to the public without fee or reward, and had even incurred great responsibility, he thought it was high time to consider the claims which his child, his aged parent, and other branches of his family had upon him for support. That his plan was to take fifty boarders at forty-two pounds per annum, half a year to be paid in advance, that he had a private friend, whose name he must not disclose, who had agreed to lend him eight hundred or a thousand pounds to fit out, and that he had a fair prospect of making the concern not only answer his pecuniary purposes, but, at the same time, promote the great cause which he still had deeply at heart. We find he has engaged a very clever young man, who is a good classical scholar and was educated under Dr. Valpy, of Reading, a person well known in the literary world, and to this young man's knowledge Lancaster is to adapt his machinery. I think, before I left town, he had thirty applications.

"On considering all these circumstances, Fox and I were clearly of the mind that the time was now come for drawing a close and strong line between Joseph Lancaster and the great public work, for, however feasible his private scheme might be, it was still possible that it might fail, and if this should, unhappily, be the case, it would be a great reproach to him, and to us as guardians of the subscriptions, if these should be laid hold of to pay his private debts. On conversing with J. L., we found him strongly disposed to put the public work into our hands entirely, provided we would exonerate him from all claims on that account, which, on maturely considering the subject, we agreed to do, upon certain conditions."*

The negotiations occupied some time, and their completion is announced with the utmost delicacy in the Report for 1812. The Committee says :—"It is well known that this institution had its origin in the individual exertions of Mr. Joseph Lancaster, a man whose history will be read with no less delight than surprise by after generations, when it will be considered that but for such a man, possessing dauntless intrepidity and persevering zeal, the clouds of darkness had still involved the minds of a great part of the human race."†

The Trustees, who had from time to time, advanced him nearly £6,000. "considered it their duty to anticipate the public gratitude by exonerating him from all personal responsibility on account of these advances."‡

"An instrument has been executed whereby, on the part of the Trustees, Mr. Lancaster is fully discharged from all personal responsibility . . . on account of their advances to him, and on the part of Mr. Lancaster the premises at the Borough Road have been assigned to the Trustees. . . . At the same time Mr. Lancaster has engaged to continue his exertions for preserving a perfect example of his system of education in the Royal Free

* *Allen, I., p. 151.*

† *P. 19.*

‡ *P. 20.*

School, and likewise in the superintendence of that important part of the institution, the seminary for the training of school-masters.”*

In 1808 Lancaster's liabilities exceeded his assets by £3,485 3s. 9d.† Though the public had since then subscribed some ten thousand pounds, there had been, owing to the extension of operations, no material diminution in the deficit, but the Committee thought release from an equivocal position cheaply purchased at the price.

The trouble with Lancaster was not yet over. Taking advantage of the fact that the student-monitors boarded, lodged, and clothed at the Borough Road were apprenticed to him, he removed a number of them to Tooting, and then actually sent in a big bill for their maintenance there. On the 12th June, 1813, Allen notes in his diary, “Lancaster has got himself into much difficulty at Tooting, as we feared he would, and now he expects us to help him. We have to carry on our great work through much tribulation.”‡

On the 17th he writes, “Sent for by the Duke of Kent. Fox could not go, so I went to Kensington alone. Told him the whole of the circumstances respecting J. L. He behaved very kindly, said that we must not give up the cause, and promised his support to the new arrangements.”‡

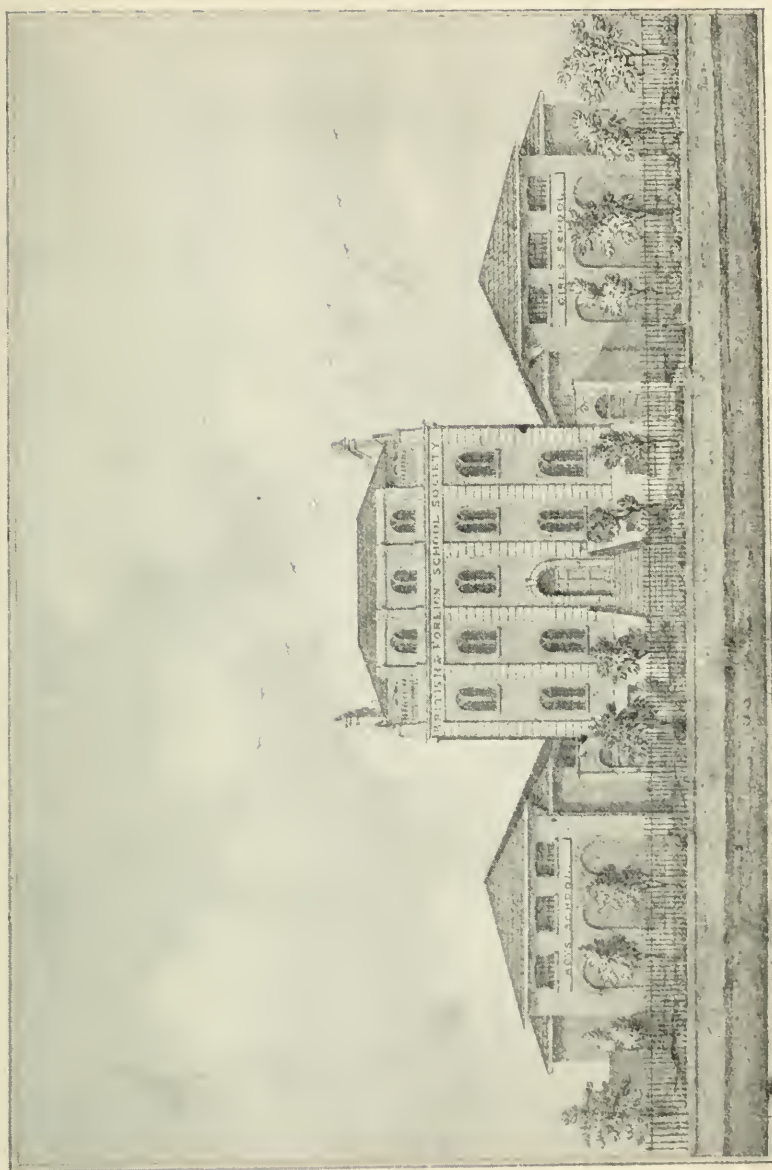
On the 23rd he writes, “To the Dukes of Kent and Sussex with Fox on the new constitution for carrying on the school: a very satisfactory interview. They behaved nobly. An important day.”§

On the 17th of July Allen writes, “Went to Kensington, with Fox and Corston, to meet the Dukes of Kent and Sussex, and the Duke of Bedford. We fully and frankly stated the nature of our difficulties with Joseph Lancaster (arising from J. L.'s conduct, and his demands upon the Committee after his losses at Tooting), but I observed it would be proper for them to hear his account of the business,—that he must be made to confine himself to the points on which he thought he had reason to complain of the Committee, and that we would attend to answer for ourselves. They were all quite of this mind, and the Duke of Kent remarked that, as Lancaster was a man of a violent temper, it would be right to have some indifferent person present, and he knew of no one more likely to manage him than Whitbread. In this we all agreed, and the Duke of Bedford undertook to engage him in the business.|| The three Dukes showed themselves real men of business and of feeling. We left with them our plan of a new constitution and retired, comforting ourselves with the hope that things were really getting into a proper train.”¶

* P 21. † Report for 1812, p. 29. ‡ *Allen*, I., p. 166. § *Id.*, p. 167.

|| The Duke was very friendly with Whitbread, who was M.P. for Bedford.

¶ *Allen*, I., p. 168.



PREMISES OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY
in the Borough Road. Opened on June 4th (the birthday of George III.), 1817.



The sequel to this meeting is described in Allen's diary for the 13th of August:—"To Argyle Street [Fox's house], then with Fox to Whitbread's, and thence all together to Kensington Palace, where Joseph Foster, W. Corston, and T. Sturge met us; also Place and Bone from Westminster, J. Hume, and J. Lancaster. The Dukes of Kent and Sussex presided. The Duke of Kent opened the business in a masterly manner, stating that his friend Hume having, with great labour, investigated the whole matter, had digested the subjects in regular order, in the form of a report, which he proposed should be read. This was accordingly done. It was drawn up with great candour and ability, and we had little to remark in reference to it. Lancaster behaved *very imprudently*, to say the least. In conclusion the Duke of Kent told him in substance that they had agreed upon certain points, which they were determined to maintain,—that they would give him time to consider of them coolly, that he might still be the prominent feature in the business, but that if he persisted in the conduct he had lately pursued, they were determined to maintain the cause *without him*. The patience and condescension of the royal Dukes on this occasion were very striking."*

The new constitution mentioned in these extracts from Allen's diary was the final stage in the development of the British and Foreign School Society. The cause which had first been private, then semi-private, was now public, and the need of a formal title and a code of rules was felt. During the second half of the year 1813 this subject divided the attention of the Committee with the attacks of Lancaster.

That poor man had ruined himself sooner than even his most intimate friends could have thought possible. At a meeting of the Committee held on the 8th of September, "Joseph Hume reported that in conjunction with F. Place he had attended a meeting of Joseph Lancaster's creditors who were very numerous, and his debts were found to amount to about £7,000. That in conjunction with J. F. Vandercom [the Committee's solicitor] they had endeavoured to get the creditors to sign a deed of trust for the division of his effects, and that not having been successful it appeared inevitable that he would be made a bankrupt."†

In spite of the bitterness of Lancaster's attacks on most of the members, the Committee resolved to treat him generously. A meeting was held at Kensington Palace on the 30th of October to settle the final draft of the rules to be submitted to the subscribers next month. Lancaster was invited to attend, but he sent word through Joseph Hume that he had another engagement. A statement of the transactions between him and the Committee was read and ordered to be entered on the minutes, and a resolution was passed offering him the post of superintendent at a salary of not more than £400. Lancaster had been informed of the intention of the Committee, but his mind, he told

* Allen, I., p. 169.

† Minutes.

Hume, was in too great a state of agitation to decide before the end of the next month whether he would accept the offer.

A general meeting of the subscribers was held on the 10th of November 1813, the rules were adopted, and the British and Foreign School Society took its present form, though the present title was not assumed till the next general meeting on the 21st of May, 1814. The report submitted to the November meeting said :—"The situation and circumstance of the institution for promoting general edacation, originally distinguished by the title of Lancasterian, requiring it to be remodelled upon principles calculated to increase its efficiency, a new code of regulations has been recently adopted with the unanimous concurrence of the subscribers, by which it is now placed on the same footing with regard to management as experience has shown to be beneficial in other public institutions. Mr. Joseph Lancaster, the author of this valuable plan of instruction, was at first adverse to the mode proposed by these regulations for securing the due administration of every branch of the institution. It may be presumed that he acted under erroneous impressions. He is now convinced of his mistake and has accepted the office of superintendent under the new regulations."*

Perhaps when Lancaster accepted he sincerely desired to work in harmony with the Committee; but the desire did not last long, for after four months he sent in his resignation. The Report presented on the 21st of May 1814, speaking of the passing of the new code of rules, says :—"That any opposition to so just and desirable a measure could have arisen was not to be expected; and when such a spirit did manifest itself on the part of Joseph Lancaster, it produced the mingled emotions of disapprobation and grief in all those who witnessed it, particularly when this opposition appeared to arise from a fear of losing personal power and authority which he was found incapable of employing to the benefit of the cause. But it was the intention of the Committee as much as possible to gratify the inclination of Mr. Lancaster, and to give him as large a share of power in his own proper place as was consistent with the well-being of the institution. The office of superintendent was framed expressly for him, and a very liberal allowance [£365] was attached to it. Though Mr. Lancaster accepted this offer, and entered upon the enjoyment of the salary, it was soon evident that he was not guided by a spirit of co-operation; and information was received by the Committee from time to time that he was meditating the formation of another institution, and employing himself in disparaging the association he was paid for serving. It was only out of tenderness to him, and to avoid the injurious impression which might be made upon the public by the idea of discordance between the managers of the system and Joseph Lancaster, that the Committee had refrained from taking active steps for obviating the evil of which Mr. Lancaster might thus be

the author, when at length, on the 16th of April, he resigned his office as superintendent in a letter addressed to the Committee in terms of great dissatisfaction against the Committee and Trustees. On this subject the Committee do not wish to say anything further than that, having toiled to support the man as well as the system, it must produce great regret in the mind of everyone who values the cause of universal education that the only enemy of Joseph Lancaster has been Joseph Lancaster himself.

"It is, however, with great satisfaction the Committee are able to state that in all other respects the institution is in precisely its former condition. The cause of Joseph Lancaster's separation has originated from nothing but personal feeling, in which no member of the Committee, no one of the Trustees, nor one of his Royal patrons nor distinguished friends have participated; the whole must be attributed to one of those mental delusions which sometimes lead men astray and cause them to commit the most fatal errors. It is, however, due to the public and the general anxiety for the important object of the institution to make known that for a long time past the Committee had derived little or no assistance from Joseph Lancaster.

"The training of schoolmasters, the organising of schools, and the furnishing of school requisites have been carried on during his long absences from London, and his miscellaneous avocations when in it with equal success as if he had himself been present

"The loss of Joseph Lancaster can, therefore, be only deplored as far as it regards himself. The cause of general education is saved, and, as far as the institution possesses the means of advancing that important object, it will now be able to proceed without obstruction."*

At the meeting when this Report was presented, Mr. Whitbread (whom Lancaster had always deemed one of his special friends) spoke. He said it was "essentially necessary to enter into a full explanation of the conduct of the man who, under Providence, had been the instrument of bringing this great work into existence, but who had, by his conduct of late, reflected discredit upon his own name—that name which was indelibly engraven upon the system, and would be handed down to posterity together with it, when the errors of him who bore it had long been forgotten.

"When it was discovered that the system he had reared had increased beyond his power of management, that he had grown giddy with his exaltation, and incapable of the prudent administration of the most important concern, it was justly asserted that the plan was now the property of the public, and not the freehold of the man.

"He could bear testimony that to Joseph Lancaster nothing but good and kindness had been done, and of late nothing but evil by him had been returned. At the meeting on the 10th of November last [1813], after a most solemn exhortation, Joseph

* *Report for 1814*, pp. 30-32.

Lancaster had agreed to render himself a useful instrument in furthering the objects of which he had been the promulgator, but of which he could no longer be the conductor. For this duty it had been stipulated that he should receive a salary of one pound per day or £365 per annum.

"The last farthing of this allowance had been paid to him, as his own receipts would prove [although he had spread rumours to the contrary].

"Those who had so long sought to shield Lancaster from the effects of his own imprudence were at last reduced to this melancholy alternative, of relinquishing either the system or the man. The choice was one of necessity, but it was made without hesitation. It was painful to add that ingratitude was a prominent feature in the conduct of Lancaster towards those friends without whose exertions he and his great plans would have remained buried in obscurity. They had advanced their substance for him with such unobtrusive modesty that, but for his disputatious disposition, their names would never have been known to the world. Yet he had the folly to assert that those men wished to raise themselves to fame on the foundation of his merit. The thousands which they had spontaneously advanced had never been repaid. They had borne in patient silence his ungrateful contumely and reproach. He demanded more at their hands as a debt due to him while his former obligations remained unacknowledged and uncanceled. Finally, he had the unblushing boldness to denounce them to the world as his bitterest enemies. When he had so turned his back upon his original supporters he referred his cause to others, hoping to shelter himself under his own representation of his case, and to prevail against his firmest, truest friends. He found every friend successively adopt the same sentiments, and have recourse to the same train of admonition and reproof. Each, upon his own showing, declared him wrong, and each was in succession discarded from his confidence.

"He, Mr. Whitbread, had been selected by Joseph Lancaster as his friend. To him Joseph Lancaster had wept and told his tale of complaint against his Trustees. He had listened to him with patience; had enquired into the truth of his allegations; had found them groundless; expressed his opinion to Joseph Lancaster, and had been discarded by him. Others were chosen as referees; and on the same grounds quickly discarded also. At length the royal Dukes then present [the Dukes of Kent and Sussex], shared the same fate as the rest and were formally discarded from the confidence of Joseph Lancaster.

"They must not suffer the man who had reared so noble a temple to destroy it. No; they must support and adorn it, and gather under its simple and magnificent dome the nations of the earth."*

* *Report* for 1814, pp. 54-57. This speech was made on the 21st of May 1814; Whitbread took his own life on the 6th of July, 1815, and Lancaster, in *Oppression and Persecution*, suggests that he was already "labouring under the gradual ossification of his brain" which the doctors discovered at the autopsy.

CHAPTER X.

Lancaster in Eclipse.

The blaze of publicity in which Lancaster lived for a dozen years or more was not reflected upon his family, and the shade in which they remained has since deepened into almost impenetrable blackness. Now and then we see some of his relatives clearly for a moment in the light of his own direct statements, but we generally catch only faint gleams of them in the light of inference. He never mentions his mother, and I have found only two allusions to her. The second is in connection with an incident which occurred in 1798, whence I conclude that she must have died soon after that date. His "aged father" is specially named as present at the meetings of 1811 and 1812, and Lancaster in 1833, making a list of the many calamities of his life, includes among them, "the death of an honoured and fond father in suffering circumstances."* He had a brother resident in Liverpool in 1809,† two sisters, described as "M. & S." opened a school for girls in the Borough Road in 1805,‡ and in 1833 he mentions "the death of a beloved sister in a parish workhouse . . . with the poverty and want of an only surviving sister."*

Mrs. Trimmer reviewed the "Improvements" in the *Guardian* for March, 1803. From the letter already quoted§ it appears that "some time after" she spoke about Lancaster to Mrs. Wakefield; "soon after" that she visited the school, and "shortly after this he marched his principal monitors down to Brentford to pay their respects to Sarah Trimmer and brought his young bride with him." In the same letter Mrs. Trimmer says that Lancaster was originally an Anabaptist, but "whether he changed for the love of a pretty Quaker whom he married," she cannot say. If Mrs. Trimmer is trustworthy, we may then affirm that in 1803 Lancaster married a Quaker, young and pretty; her name was Elizabeth.|| Probably after the birth of her only child (a daughter) she went out of her mind. This is how her husband describes the event:—"From 1805 a cloud of sorrow had penetrated the soul and paralysed the exertions of J. L. . . . His wife, amiable and pious, had been pronounced incurably and *constitutionally* deranged. In the highest tide of prosperity, taken by the right hand not only by the princes, nobles, and worthies, of his native London, but of other nations; patronised by his King and cheered with the prospect of national and universal usefulness, his happiness was not without alloy; the partner of his heart could never participate in its joys. For many years was he destitute of all domestic happiness, without hope or mitigation, but what

* *Epitome*, p. 24.† *Corston*, p. iv.‡ *Rise and Progress of the School for Girls*, p. 3. § *See ante* p. 28|| *Oppression and Persecution*, p. 6.

proved transient and delusive. Four times was she removed from him to the private care of medical men : and every time by the act of his friends and not his own desire, though the necessity was painfully obvious to all who knew the actual circumstances of her otherwise excellent mind. . . . She died some years ago* in the bosom of her family, and was blessed with an interval of reason and peace in her last moments, which compensated for a world of suffering. . . .

"On the first occasion when she was removed from his habitation by the direction of her medical advisers he became so low and ill as to be unable to bear the place, and was advised himself to go into the country for a change of air and repose of mind. He had no idea of lecturing as a pursuit or a duty, though he had before spoken in public on subjects connected with local schools, duties of parents, etc. Happening to be at Watehet, in Somerset, on the side of the Bristol Channel, he was invited by Joseph Jennings, now of New York, and his friends, to a public opportunity, and he proposed a lecture on education. This was his first ; the second was at Swansea, in Wales ; the third near Cardiff, . . . the next at Bristol, the following at Dover, Canterbury, Lynn, Cambridge, etc. . . . Robert Raikes of Gloucester first advised him to charge a price for admission to his lectures. He did so in Gloucester, and the result was in succession many hundreds of pounds towards his travelling expenses for promulgating his plans."†

The only connected account which we have of the doings of Lancaster during the four years immediately following the severance of his connection with the British and Foreign School Society, is the following brief footnote in Hamel :—"For two years he travelled about, visiting every part of Ireland and of Scotland, and establishing new schools in several places. If he had continued thus, he would have made himself very useful and might perhaps have brought his affairs into order, but he only endangered his own reputation more and more, daily. He would allow no one to aid him in the management of his money matters, and constantly accused those who offered to aid him of an intention to imitate his former friends, who had got rid of him in order to usurp all the glory of his achievements. Tormented by such unjust jealousies and suspicions, he even published at Bristol, in 1816, a pamphlet on the 'Oppression and Persecution' which he said he had suffered. This ingratitude gradually deprived him of the public esteem, and his supporters one by one abandoned him. He now [1818] lives quite retired with one of his old protectors, Mr. Holt of Manchester, wasting away in poverty‡ and mortification. How deplorable it is to have to recount these sad details of a man

* Lancaster is writing in 1833 ; he says elsewhere (*Epitome*, p. 21), "The domestic trials of J. Lancaster from the affliction of his wife's mind lasted 17 years." She must, therefore, have died in 1822.

† *Epitome*, p. 9.

‡ At one time his poverty was so great that he was compelled to pawn even his Bible.—*Epitome*, p. 22.

who has rendered such great service to his country and to humanity. His labours are accomplished and his fame has gone abroad throughout the whole world. May he still find peace and happiness.”*

Allen mentions Lancaster now and then in his diary or correspondence. On the 2nd of July 1814, he says :—“As J. L. is abusing us in printed handbills, Fox and I think we owe it to ourselves and the cause not to go into a controversy with him, but, once for all, to publish a brief narrative of facts, abstaining from reflections, while we leave the public to form their own conclusions.”†

In a letter to Richard Reynolds, dated the 26th of November, 1815, Allen says :—“J. Atkinson, of Darlington, sent me, some time ago, a little pamphlet which Joseph Lancaster printed at Edinburgh, entitled, ‘A Narrative,’ &c., full of the grossest misrepresentations and personal abuse of Fox and me, by name. It would be quite easy by a plain statement of facts to put him down completely, but the enemy would triumph in his exposure and we are strongly advised to forbear.”‡

I have not seen the pamphlet named by Allen, but it is impossible that it could contain grosser misrepresentations or viler abuse than the “Oppression and Persecution” named by Hamel. In this, Lancaster affirms that the Quakers, who so generously subscribed for the promotion of his plan, were impostors to whom the honours which he received “were as thorns of jealousy in their feet.” In advancing thousands of pounds to extricate him from his difficulties they were only “decoying him into a debt”: the man at whose suit he was imprisoned was their tool; Corston, in refusing to go bail for him, was forsaking him in the hour of his adversity.§ Lancaster insinuates that Fox was out of his mind when they first met at Dover;|| the “pretended friends” who tried to disentangle his accounts before his impending bankruptcy offered their services “designedly for the purpose of driving his affairs to ruin”; the solicitor of the Committee who tried to protect his interests at the meeting of creditors was a “hungry fellow wanting a job”¶; and “Joseph Lancaster hesitates not to declare that by reason of the hypocritical friendship of Joseph Fox and William Allen his public work has sustained more injury and his mind suffered severer wounds than from all other sorrows of his life in combination.”***

* P. 40.

† Allen, l., p. 205.

‡ Id., p. 256.

§ *Oppression and Persecution*, p. 6.—The full title (omitting the motto) is :—“Oppression and Persecution; or a Narrative of a Variety of Singular Facts that have occurred in the Rise, Progress, and Promulgation of the Royal Lancasterian System of Education; founded on Documents, Vouchers, Letters, Minutes, and well-attested Occurrences. Interspersed with Accounts of the good accomplished and likely to be yet more extensively diffused, especially in Ireland. By the Founder of the Lancasterian System under Royal Patronage, Joseph Lancaster Bristol: Printed and published by John Evans & Co., and sold by all Booksellers.” [8vo.; pp. viii + 45.]

|| *Oppression and Persecution*, p. 9.

¶ Id., p. 31.

** Id., p. 34.

Every offer of help, seen through the medium of suspicion, was distorted. Thus, when the Committee of the British and Foreign School Society specially created the office of superintendent for Lancaster's benefit, and attached to it what would have been to him a handsome salary, the intention was to "chain him to the oar of a sinecure in the almost stagnant Lethe of their usurpation."* The offer of an appointment in South America was similarly distorted. When Venezuela was in rebellion against Spain the task of advocating its cause in England was entrusted to General Miranda. He became very friendly with Bentham, James Mill, Place, and other supporters of the monitorial plan, and with them visited the Borough Road. He was so impressed with the possibilities of the system that he sent home for some young men to come to be instructed in it. Some years later, when the rebellion had succeeded, Bolivar, the President, wrote to the Committee for "two persons properly qualified to organise and establish schools," promising them a "liberal allowance." The Committee thought this was a splendid opportunity for Lancaster and approached him through David Holt, but he refused with scorn a proposal in which he saw nothing except a malevolent desire to banish him to a country where the climate would be sure to kill him.†

Perhaps what rankled most in his mind was the omission of his name from the title of the Society. His Trustees he said had "literally *choused* him out of a local institution which he had reared from its foundations until it had proved a blessing to thousands. So great was their personal enmity that they sought to alter the name . . . calling it the British and Foreign System (as if Britons and foreigners had *combined* in its *invention*), an unmeaning term, in lieu of its generic title, the 'Royal Lancasterian,' meaning the plan invented by Joseph Lancaster and patronised by the King and Prince Regent of Great Britain and Ireland."‡

On the last day of the year in which he had been so vilely and unjustly attacked, Allen wrote to the Duke of Sussex to describe the progress of the Society. He says, "Divine Providence has been pleased to crown the cause which has been so nobly patronised and supported by thy Royal brother and thyself, with the most complete success. The invested subscription of ten thousand pounds for the British and Foreign School Society is not only raised but we shall have a surplus of two or three hundred pounds towards the new school room, which we hope to get completely ready, and everything in activity, in our new mansion, before the next general meeting in the month called May, which will be one of uncommon interest. The work prospers in all directions, and the only regret we now feel is that poor Lancaster is in such a disposition of mind that he cannot harmonise with his best and tried friends, nor can they have anything to say to him, until he gives unequivocal proof of a

* *Oppression and Persecution*, p. 38.

† *Id.*, p. 32.

‡ *Id.*, p. 6.

change of heart, for he would have ruined the whole concern, and some of those engaged in it, if great firmness, under trying circumstances, had not been displayed.”*

In the course of a long answer, the Duke remarks, “As for Joseph Lancaster, I will not begin the year by abusing him; indeed, every cause is a bad one where it is necessary to call in such aid; but thus far I must add, that great as his sins have been, and ever must be acknowledged, the smiles of flattery were too bewitching for him, and he has unfortunately become a slave at the shrine of that seducer.”†

Allen writes in his diary on the 13th of June, 1817: “Went . . . to Sir John Jackson, in company with Joseph Foster, about J. Lancaster. Sir R. D. Phillips‡ has become Lancaster’s partisan; we cannot take him again into the school consistently with the safety of the great cause; yet, notwithstanding the vile abuse which he has publicly heaped upon me, I can freely forgive him, and am quite willing to contribute towards his support.”§

Allen’s lightest word needs no confirmation, but this expression of his willingness to help Lancaster is illustrated by an entry in his diary dated the 11th of June, 1818:—“Thomas Sturge, Junior, and David Holt|| are raising a subscription for Joseph Lancaster, to enable him to go to America, and they have written us a letter requesting our assistance; I have subscribed £25, Joseph Foster the same.”¶

Lancaster set out from London, and there is something pathetic in the reflection which he records:—“As the ship sailed down the River Thames and English Channel, his eye was frequently on towns and villages on that line of coast where, in consequence of his lectures and publications, schools have been established and among them were Margate, Deal, Dover, Folkestone, Hastings, Eastbourne, Seaford, Brighton, Arundel, Portsmouth, Isle of Wight, Poole, and Plymouth.”** *Sunt lacrimæ rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.*

* Allen, I., p. 294.

† *Id.* p. 296.

‡ Author, bookseller, and publisher (1767–1840). Imprisoned for publishing Radical literature. Founded the *Monthly Magazine*. Sheriff of London in 1807; knighted, 1808.

§ Allen, I., p. 314.

|| Doubtless the Holt of Manchester mentioned by Hamel. (*See ante*, p. 54.)

¶ Allen, I., p. 357.

** *The Lancasterian System of Education with Improvements*, p. xi. (Baltimore, 1821.)

CHAPTER XI.

Lancaster in America.

The Americans, with their usual avidity for new ideas, welcomed Lancaster's innovations so heartily that, ten years after the publication of the first edition of the "Improvements," there were probably more monitorial schools in the United States than in England. On the 9th of April 1805* the Legislature of the State of New York passed a law entitled "An Act to incorporate the Society instituted in the City of New York for the Establishment of a Free School for the Education of Poor Children who do not belong to, or are not provided for by, any Religious Body." When the trustees elected under this Act came together "they found that they had undertaken a great task, and encountered an important responsibility: without funds, without teachers, without a house in which to instruct, and without a system of instruction." One of their number, however, had been in England, had met Lancaster, and seen his system in operation, and, after due deliberation, they resolved to adopt it. "Provided thus with an excellent system and an able teacher, the school was opened on the 6th of May, 1806, in a small apartment in Bancker Street. This was the first scion of the Lancaster stock engrafted in the United States." Funds were still wanting. The public subscribed 5,648 dollars; but this sum being insufficient, an application was made to the State Legislature for assistance, and on the 27th of February, 1807, a law was passed granting 4,000 dollars for the "purpose of erecting a suitable building or buildings for the instruction of poor children, and every year thereafter the sum of 1,000 dollars for the purpose of promoting the benevolent objects of the Society." Application being made to the City, also, the Corporation granted a building adjacent to the Almshouse for the temporary accommodation of the school, and the sum of 500 dollars towards putting it in repair. To this place the school was removed on the 1st of May, 1807. The new premises were soon inadequate; the Corporation granted a site for an entirely new building, and 1,500 dollars towards the building fund, and thither, in January, 1810, the school was transferred. Meanwhile, the example of New York had fired other cities, and Lancasterian schools had been opened in Philadelphia, and in Burlington, New Jersey.

The Report of the London Committee for 1811 mentions also schools at Baltimore and Washington, the latter under one

* Details respecting the establishment of the first Lancasterian Schools in America are given in an address delivered by the Hon. De Witt Clinton at the opening of the New York "Independent Free School" and reported in the *Albany Register* for January 16th, 1810 (Reprinted in the *Philanthropist*, I., 86.)

of Lancaster's first apprentices, Robert Ould, who had been master of a school at Swansea; and the Reports for succeeding years make large additions to the list.

Clinton, who was Governor of the Empire State, says in his message to the Legislature, in 1818:—"Having participated in the first establishment of the Lancasterian system in this country, having carefully observed its progress and witnessed its benefits, I can confidently recommend it as an invaluable improvement, which, by a wonderful combination of economy in expense and rapidity of instruction, has created a new era in education. And I am desirous that all our common schools should be supplied with teachers of this description."*

Thus, when, in the autumn of 1818, Lancaster reached New York, he had come among a people prepared to do him honour. He was welcomed by the Mayor and the Recorder of the City, and by the Governor of the State. Clinton invited him to Albany, and "introduced him to the leading persons in the chief towns on the Hudson," and when he went to Philadelphia the officials vied with each other in paying him attentions. On the 26th of January, 1819, he visited the Congress at Washington, and the House of Representatives passed a resolution: "That Joseph Lancaster, the friend of learning and of man, be admitted to a seat within the Hall."†

Since his arrival, Lancaster had had no time to show himself the friend of learning or of man; his American reception was the consequence of his English reputation. When he began to lecture‡ that reputation was confirmed.

The Quaker teacher naturally made his earliest home in the Quaker City, where, on the 21st of December, 1818, he opened a school which should serve as a model for other schools to be established by the State of Pennsylvania. He was unfortunate in his choice of place, for there was constant intercourse between the Quakers of the old world and of the new, and "rumours of debt and of discreditable pecuniary transactions in England soon followed him."§ He then moved on to Baltimore, where he founded another "Lancasterian Institute," and published "The Lancasterian System of Education, with Improvements." This book was dedicated as a "memorial of gratitude" to David Holt of Manchester, "one of the very first among the friends of the system" and to Lancaster himself "a firm, undaunted, and affectionate friend beyond the period when" he "bade farewell to the shores of England perhaps for ever." "No royal or noble duke" was "now wished to decorate with tinsel pomp" the introduction to his work. Having placed the name of David

* *Rise and Growth of the Normal School Idea in the United States*, p. 23.

† *Epitome*, p. 11.

‡ He had given one lecture before the resolution of the House of Representatives was passed.—*Epitome*, p. 11.

§ *Dunn*, p. 18.

Holt at its head, the author had "recorded the name of an honest man, the noblest work of God, a name which in any circumstances, and at any distance," would "revive the recollections of patriotism, of endeared friendship and talent, associated with virtue which titled folly could never drive, bribe, or lure out of the path of independent friendship, when many around were in the trammels of contemptible influence and led even as in leading strings of children." Lancaster had no desire to tread again the borders of his native land, "as in return for a life of zeal devoted to its children's good, and for pecuniary sacrifices of no small magnitude," he had had "a sickening sample of that spirit which mingles hypocrisy with its religion, corrupts its liberties, defiles its charities, and preys on the vitals of [its] prosperity."*

"Those citizens of the United States who feel the importance of education are informed that J. Lancaster and his family have made Baltimore their permanent home and are decided on considering America their adopted country."† This statement exemplifies the risk of prophecy. Four years after it was made, "J. Lancaster and his family" quitted Baltimore and intended to quit the United States for ever. In 1824 Lancaster was taken ill, and "reduced to the brink of the grave."‡ While he was still "extremely sick and recovering in a slow and languid manner," an officer, an aide of General Bolivar, understanding "that J. Lancaster intended to go to the south of France . . . for the recovery of his health, he recommended him to go to the fine climate of Caracas for the same purpose and promised to prepare his way, which he did."§ On March 16th, 1825, the President himself sent him a letter of invitation.

Writing in 1821 Lancaster calls a similar invitation, transmitted to him through the Committee of the British and Foreign School Society, an attempt on the part of the Committee to induce him "*to go to his grave seeing it OPEN before him*,"|| but now he considers it an opportunity for emigrating to a "fine climate" where he may both regain strength and continue his labours. His wife was dead and his daughter was married to one of his early pupils, and the young people seem to have left him on the way south in order to settle as teachers at Gaudalaxara in the interior of Mexico.

A month after the arrival of Lancaster in Caracas, Bolivar gave him a bill for 20,000 dollars to be spent in advancing the cause of education, and he forwarded it to England.

Though he had not yet actually received the gold which the bill represented he celebrated the expectation of receiving it by taking unto himself a wife who already possessed what he calls "a lovely and interesting family." She was the widow of "John Robinson, of Philadelphia, who was a much honoured friend of

* *Epitome*, p. iii. † *Id.*, p. viii. ‡ *Id.*, p. 11. § *Id.*, p. 36.

|| *The Lancasterian System of Education, with Improvements*, p. x.—The italics and capitals are Lancaster's own.

his for 20 years.* When dying, John Robinson left as a *legacy* his only daughter to Lancaster. A considerable space after his death, and not knowing anything of this circumstance, Joseph Lancaster paid his addresses to the widow. They were accepted, and he came into possession of his legacy—this lovely olive plant around his table—not knowing that such a precious boon had been left him till afterwards.”†

Mrs. Robinson must have followed her second husband to South America (leaving, I think, her lovely and interesting offspring behind her). The marriage took place in Lancaster’s schoolroom, and was attended by the President “with his leading officers and a large party of gentry and merchants.” The fact that the books, maps and apparatus displayed attracted particular attention deserves notice, for, as far as I can make out, it was a difference as to the ownership of these which led to the quarrel between Bolivar and Lancaster. As Lancaster had been compelled to pawn even his Bible and could not pay his own passage, it is not likely that he took any property with him from England, and it is not likely that he had acquired much property during the troublous years which he had spent in the States. The probability, therefore, is that the Government servant had bought the things in dispute with Government money, and Bolivar, determined either to vindicate his right or exert his might, “*commanded J. Lancaster to deliver up whatever property remained on hand.*” Yes, he *commanded* Joseph Lancaster to do a dishonest action, at the recollection of which, if this dictator, this man of blood, had ever had a particle of shame in his iron soul or corrupt heart, his black face would have blushed both red and white.”‡

Bolivar had an effective weapon which he did not hesitate to use. Lancaster had not yet received the 20,000 dollars, and the President instructed his agents in England not to honour the bill.

“On the 18th of the fourth month, April, 1827, Joseph Lancaster was compelled to leave Caracas and the country. The base, cowardly and barbarous attacks personally made on his wife by some of Bolivar’s own friends were the first cause. She decided that she could not remain in in that country with safety to life, and that Bolivar’s promise of protection was nugatory and unavailing. In this J. L. concurred, and they claimed their passports. The passports were then instantly and actually ordered under Bolivar’s own hand and actually and wilfully retarded by the very agent who was commanded to grant them.”§

Lancaster and his wife “were glad to escape with their lives from that land of deceit, revolution, and blood. His wife came to

* This shows that Robinson, like Lancaster himself, must have been a recent emigrant to America.

† *Epitome*, p. 24.

‡ *Id.*, p. 38.—The italics are faithfully reproduced. Before this bitter attack a long list of the kindnesses which Lancaster had received at Bolivar’s hand is given to prove that Bolivar was a villain from the beginning.

§ *Id.*, p. 37.

Philadelphia, after much ill-usage in Colombia, and was treated like a father [*sic*] and a friend by that honour to the name of man and Christian, Robert Ralston, Esq. . . . Joseph Lancaster had himself, with his wife's desire and consent, to take a more circuitous route.* He "was placed on board a British ship, where the fangs and talons of a tyrant could have no hold on him. He arrived at New Haven in the brig *Shepherdess* from St. Croix in the spring of 1827."†

The next place at which we hear of him is Trenton, New Jersey. He says, "In all nations there are individuals who do little honour to their country, though they ought generally to be received not as a specimen, but as exceptions, to the national character. So there are places which form exceptions; as with men, so with towns. Such was the experience and unhappy contrast to J. L.'s *family*, his wife and children more than himself, at Trenton in 1828." He does not describe the nature of the experience because he says it is "well-known to the public of New York, by the munificent and noble donation of 500 dollars given on the motion of Aldermen Peters by the Corporation of New York in 1828, and the kind aid from New Haven by J. Brewster. . . . To this must be added the contributions from Montreal, from Horatio Gates, from John White, and from Quebec.

"As J. L.'s wife and family had a constitution enfeebled by a southern climate and by their sickness and ill-usage at Trenton . . . their native air of England was thought best for the restoration of their health. They at last determined to go there from Montreal or Quebec. When they left New York on their way to Whitehall,‡ the mother and her youngest son were again taken ill, the lives of both in danger, the latter despaired of. When able to travel on, relapse after relapse occurred again on their road to Montreal."§

When they reached Canada the season was too far advanced for a voyage to England, and they were obliged to winter in Montreal, where they decided to be useful. "Sir James Kempt, then Governor-in-Chief of the British Provinces, gave to J. L. in 1829 the same kind, cordial, and generous welcome as his predecessor, Earl Dalhousie, gave in 1828 at Quebec, Earl Dalhousie having been one of J. L.'s earliest subscribers twenty years before." Kempt "gave £10 at once, which he afterwards engaged to double in favour of the experiments proposed to him."|| The experiments consisted in the rapid teaching of reading to backward children. They were sufficiently successful to induce the Legislature of Lower Canada to grant £200 for further experiments in the teaching of writing and arithmetic to similar children, but an outbreak of cholera caused the schools to be closed.

* *Epitome*, p. 11.

† *Id.*, p. 38.

‡ A village at the head of Lake Champlain, about 220 miles from New York on the direct road to Montreal.

§ *Epitome*, p. 12.

|| *Id.*, p. 13.

How long Lancaster remained in Canada I do not know, but in 1833, he was back at New Haven, writing an "Epitome of Some of the Chief Events and Transactions in the Life of Joseph Lancaster, containing an Account of the Rise and Progress of the Lancasterian System of Education, and the Author's future prospects of Usefulness to Mankind." An address, dated "14th of 11th month," informs the public that the purpose of the booklet is "to promote the proposal of a subscription for a publication containing further improvements in education, a publication which may contribute to the present support of my family, while the proceeds of this tract will aid in the education of my own beloved children, a duty which, as I am now advancing in life,* I wish *fully* to perform while it is yet day. One motive for making this Epitome no longer is that I am obliged to seek aid for my family as early as possible, and cannot therefore delay the work for leisure and augmentation."†

The project was to issue an edition of 3,000 copies of a book to be sold to subscribers at a dollar, payable in advance. Lancaster wants the money at once because his friends "in Europe, and especially in England, are spontaneously rallying round him in his old age. They are providing an annuity intended to keep him in future above the vicissitudes to which the singular and varied scenes of his past life have exposed him. No results or receipts can be expected from this source until the spring of 1834. Present suffering, however, results from relief being protracted to a distant period."‡

The appeal for subscriptions to produce an annuity, reprinted from the *Morning Herald*, is given in an appendix (p. 47). It proves conclusively that the members of the Committee of the British and Foreign School Society bore no malice towards their old traducer. The Duke of Bedford, Joseph Fletcher, Luke Howard, and Joseph Foster are set down for 20 guineas each, William Allen for £10, and others for amounts bringing the total up to nearly £400.

Lancaster himself tries to quicken the generosity of his readers by a most distressing list of the calamities which he has endured. "Adverse events, sickness and loss have four times deprived him of all his little property (the last in Colombia) . . . his heart has been grieved with the death of a beloved sister in a parish workhouse, with the death of an honoured and beloved father in suffering circumstances, with the poverty and want of an only surviving sister, with the derangement of a beloved wife, with the death of all his brothers, with the loss by absence and a foreign land of an only child, with personal want, privation, and family suffering, with inability to provide *all* the proper books for the education of his own children."§

I can say nothing of the movements of the much-tried man during the next five years, except that in 1836 he was in

* He was fifty-five.

† *Epitome*, p. iii.

‡ *Epitome*, p. 16. Like Lancaster's former project of a large book this came to nothing.

§ *Id.*, p. 24.

Philadelphia, for on the 4th of October, 1838, his son-in-law, writing to Allen from Mexico, says that he has not heard from Lancaster for more than two years, and asks for tidings of him. "His last letter was from Philadelphia, in which he announces his intention of again visiting his native country. In this letter he mentions having the prospect of renewing his old friendship with his first and best friends, William Allen and William Corston, Esqs., from whom he had received proofs of unbounded kindness, and also most important services."*

In 1838 he was in New York, whence, on the 21st of September, he wrote to the ever-faithful Corston:—"My beloved friend, I am on my apostolic mission to the dear children of this great city. I have already visited above sixty schools, and before I have done in the island of Manhattan, on which the city of New York stands, I shall have visited a hundred and fifty. Teachers, monitors, and children, when they see me the second time, all seem to shout and sing—"Here comes our father." But I love their attention to their several duties, their mental improvement, and their duty to their God and Saviour. Whenever I steal their hearts, which, indeed, is very often (for I have souls for my hire) I carry them to their proper Owner, that He may fix the seal of Heaven upon them, and take them into His best keeping. I know of nothing good in visiting schools and lecturing among children, unless I can carry them to the Throne, and leave them there.

"I have no doubt that I shall be, ere long, in England; indeed I did not know but that I should have sailed in the 'Great Western' on the 8th of next month; but it seems that the Will of our Heavenly Father is that I should be detained here a little longer, because He has His work for me to do—His little lambs whom He wills me to feed—and to that Will I bow; but I believe it is not for long, though I cannot fix the time for one month or two. This my dear sister and thyself may be assured of, that I shall not delay to come to you one hour after my work is done. My wife cheerfully gives me up to come; and I have friends who will make the way easy. Nothing, however, shall hinder the Lord's work, in the Lord's time. It will be three or four weeks before I have done here. I am kindly welcomed and liberally treated by all my friends. The whole American public are with me. I am about to take fifty boys who know nothing, not even their letters, and teach them to read in from one week to a month. I shall have public attestations of their ignorance, and I shall have demonstrative proof of their actual improvement. With properly trained teachers and monitors I should not scruple to undertake to teach ten thousand pupils in different schools, not knowing their letters, all to read fluently in three weeks to three months—idiots, absentees, and truants only excepted Respecting my dear Elizabeth, she is still with her husband and family in Guadaloup, in Mexico. She has four children, all boys,

* *Allen*, III., p. 294.

one of whom lately wrote me a very pretty letter. I heard from them only yesterday ; they are well, or were so about a month ago. I hope one day to see them all in London, but can do nothing for their deliverance till I am in London. I am much obliged by thy calling on my dear sister. Be so kind as to call again, with my love, and tell her that I believe you both will see me in London ; and that her faithfulness unto death will be rewarded with a crown of life.”*

A month later Corston received the following letter :—“ Sir, it is my painful task to communicate to you the sudden death of your much-esteemed friend Joseph Lancaster, on the 23rd instant [October]. He was run over in a street of this city [New York], his ribs broken, and his head very much lacerated. I was with him after the accident, and his friend William Wagstaff, a Quaker, formerly of England, administered every comfort to him he needed. He died on the 23rd instant, without a struggle, full of faith. His friend Wagstaff says, ‘ On the last Sabbath, in the meeting he held, he was more like an angel than a mortal.’ Well might the prayer be offered by us who witnessed it, to ‘ die the death of the righteous.’—J. Gayler.”†

Lancaster was within a month of sixty when the accident occurred. His death was untimely in a double sense ; it need not have come at sixty, and for his reputation’s sake it should have come at thirty. At thirty some of his defects of character had not appeared, and those that had appeared might still pass for virtues in disguise ; and at thirty all his creative energy was exhausted. And what were the results of his creative energy ? By his monitors he prepared the way for the pupil-teacher system which, in spite of its faults, has given us a succession of masters and mistresses unsurpassed as instructors or disciplinarians ; he made training a necessary preliminary of teaching, and founded the first training college ; he prepared the way for the establishment of our two great scholastic societies and of our Board schools, and (an achievement which alone made the rest possible) he succeeded in calling attention to popular education as the work which lovers of their country could most hopefully undertake, and he showed how Christians of all creeds could unite in undertaking it.

* *Corston*, p. 82.

† Allen says that J. Gayler was an old pupil of Lancaster’s.—*Allen*, III., p. 294. In the *Epitome*, p. 55, there is an advertisement of “C. J. Gayler’s patent double fire-proof chests and safes, warranted.”

ADDENDA.

While this book was passing through the press I noticed the following illustrative passages :—

Page 5.—Elizabeth Fry.

Fifth Month, 15th [1801].—We went in the evening to see a friend (Joseph Lancaster), who kept a school for poor children. I felt a wish that the young man might be preserved in humility ; for I know, from experience, it is a hard matter, when we have the apparent admiration of many, and more particularly of those whom we esteem.—*Memoir of the Life of Elizabeth Fry, I., p. 103.*

Plasnet, Seventh Month, 9th [1801].—Joseph Lancaster came in after breakfast ; I had some talk with him about poor people ; he enlightened me about his school plans, but not generally about the poor.—*Id., 104.*

Page 36.—Robert Owen.

My mind had been early deeply impressed while in Manchester with the importance of education for the human race. I had watched and aided the progress of Lancaster in his early attempts to commence something towards a beginning to instruct the poor, and had encouraged him to the extent that my means permitted. And when the Church set up Dr. Bell in opposition to Lancaster, I was inclined equally to encourage Dr. Bell.

I . . . assisted Lancaster, from first to last, with a thousand pounds, and offered to Dr. Bell's Committee a like amount if they would open the national schools to children of parents of every creed ; but I offered to give them only half the sum if they persisted in their rule to shut the doors against all except those professing the creed of the Church of England. The committee of the national schools debated this proposal of mine for two days, and at length decided, by a small majority of votes, as I was informed, to receive the five hundred pounds, keeping their doors closed against Dissent ; and declined to open them for a gift of double the amount.—*The Life of Robert Owen written by himself, I., p. 84.*

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Improvements in Education as it respects the industrious classes of the community, containing a short account of its present state, hints towards its improvement, and a detail of some practical experiments conducive to that end. By Joseph Lancaster. London, 1803 ; 8vo., pp. v. + 66.

I have not seen the second edition. The third edition is practically a new work. It is entitled

Improvements in Education as it respects the industrious classes of the community, containing among other important particulars an account of the institution for the education of one thousand poor children, Borough Road, Southwark, and of the new system of education on which it is conducted. By Joseph Lancaster. . . . Third edition, with additions. London, 1805 ; 8vo., pp. xvi. + 211.

The fourth edition, dated 1806, is virtually a reprint of the third.

An Appeal for Justice in the cause of ten thousand poor and orphan children, and for the honour of the Holy Scriptures : being a reply exposing the misrepresentations in the charge delivered at the visitation of Charles Daubeney, Archdeacon of Sarum, June, 1806. By Joseph Lancaster. . . . London, 1806 ; 8vo., pp. iv. + 46.

The British System of Education : being a complete epitome of the improvements and inventions practised at the Royal Free Schools, Borough Road, Southwark. By Joseph Lancaster. . . . London, 1810 ; 8vo., pp. xvii. + 56.

Hints and Directions for building, fitting up, and arranging school rooms on the British System of Education. By Joseph Lancaster. London, 1809 ; 8vo., pp. 33.

An Account of a Remarkable Establishment of Education at Paris, extracted from the "Literary Repository" for April 16th, 1788 to which are added queries addressed to Doctor Bell, on his claims to the inventions of the British System of Education. By Joseph Lancaster. London, 1809 ; 8vo., pp. xix. + 22.

The "remarkable establishment" was the Chevalier Paulet's, where monitors were employed.

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remarkable origin of those valuable institutions. By Joseph Lancaster. London, 1809 ; 8vo., pp. 32.

A Report of the Rise and Progress of the School for Girls, instituted on the Royal Lancasterian System of Education, in the Borough Road, Southwark, 1803 : describing the principles on which the industry of it is conducted. [By Lancaster's sisters, "M." and "S."] London, 1812 ; 8vo., pp. viii. + 45.

Oppression and Persecution : or a narrative of a variety of singular facts that have occurred in the rise, progress, and promulgation of the Royal Lancasterian System of Education ; founded on documents, vouchers, letters, minutes, and well-attested occurrences. Interspersed with accounts of the good accomplished and likely to be yet more extensively diffused, especially in Ireland. By the founder of the Lancasterian System, under royal patronage, Joseph Lancaster. . . . Bristol, 1816 ; 8vo., pp. viii. + 45.

The Lancasterian System of Education with Improvements. By its founder Joseph Lancaster of the Lancasterian Institute, Baltimore. . . . Baltimore : Published by the author and sold at the Lancasterian Institute 1821 ; 8vo., pp. xv. + 40.

Epitome of some of the chief events and transactions in the life of Joseph Lancaster, containing an account of the rise and progress of the Lancasterian system of education and the author's future prospects of usefulness to mankind. Written by himself and published to promote the education of his family. . . . New Haven, 1833 ; 8vo., pp. 103.

✓ A Brief Sketch of the life of Joseph Lancaster, including the introduction of his system of education. By William Corston, one of the original six trustees nominated by J. Lancaster himself in 1808. London, 1840 ; 8vo., pp. xii. + 96.

Sketches. Part I. : Joseph Lancaster and his contemporaries. Part II. : William Allen, his life and labours. By Henry Dunn. London, 1848 ; 12mo., pp. iv. + 145.

This is a reprint with alterations of articles which appeared in the *Eclectic Review* in 1845 and 1848. In the reprint the article on Lancaster occupies 62 pages, but a third of these are given to Bell.

Of the Education of the Poor, being the first part of a digest of the reports of the Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor and containing a selection of those articles which have a reference to education. London, 1809 ; pp. iv. + 380.

The report on "Day Schools in the Borough" (Lancaster's) occupies pp. 159-166, and that on the "Industry School at Fincham," pp. 201-207.

A Comparative View of the new plan of education promulgated by Mr. Joseph Lancaster in his tracts concerning the instruction of the children of the labouring part of the community, and of the system of Christian education founded by our pious

forefathers for the initiation of the young members of the Established Church in the principles of the Reformed Religion. By Mrs. Trimmer. London, 1805 ; 8vo., pp. 152.

A Comparative View of the plans of education as detailed in the publications of Dr. Bell and Mr. Lancaster. The second edition with remarks on Dr. Bell's "Madras School" and notes to the Managers and Committees of Charity and Sunday Schools on the practicability of extending such institutions upon Mr. Lancaster's plan. By Joseph Fox. . . . London, 1809 ; 8vo., pp. iv. + 72.

A Vindication of Mr. Lancaster's System of Education from the aspersions of Professor Marsh, the *Quarterly, British, and Anti-Jacobin Reviews*, &c., &c. By a Member of the Royal Institution. [Joseph Fox]. . . . London, 1812 ; 8vo., pp. 112.

Schools for All, in preference to Schools for Churchmen only ; or the state of the controversy between the advocates for the Lancasterian system of universal education and those who have set up an exclusive and partial system under the name of the Church and Dr. Bell. [By James Mill.] London, 1812 ; 8vo., pp. iv. + 84.

Pp. 1-52 are a textual reprint from an article in the *Philanthropist*, vol. II., pp. 37-108, headed "A review of the arguments of Dr. Herbert Marsh and others in opposition to the Lancasterian plans for educating the poor." This is followed by two appendices reviewing the statements and arguments of Dr. Marsh and the *Quarterly Review*.

A Comparative View of the two new systems of education for the infant poor ; in a charge delivered to the clergy of the officiality of the Dean and Chapter of Durham at Berwick-upon-Tweed on Thursday, April 23rd, and at Durham on Thursday, May 12th, 1811, by the Rev. R. G. Bowyer, LL.B., Prebendary of Durham and Official. London, 1811 ; 8vo., pp. 25.

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Substance of a Speech on the Poor Laws, delivered in the House of Commons on Thursday, February 19th, 1807. With an appendix. By Mr. Whitbread. London, 1807 ; 8vo., pp. 107.

A Letter addressed to Samuel Whitbread, Esq., M.P., in consequence of the unqualified approbation expressed by him in the House of Commons of Mr. Lancaster's system of education, the religious part of which is here shown to be incompatible with the safety of the Established Church, and in its tendency subversive of Christianity itself. . . . Second edition. By John Bowles, Esq. London, 1808 ; 8vo., pp. 66.

The New School, being an attempt to illustrate its principles, detail, and advantages. By Thomas Bernard, Esq. [afterwards Sir Thomas]. London, December, 1809 ; 8vo., pp. viii. + 111.

The Madras School, or Elements of Tuition, comprising the Analysis of an Experiment in Education made at the Male Asylum, Madras, with its effects, proofs, and illustrations ; to which are added extracts of sermons preached at Lambeth ; a sketch of a national institution for training up the children of the poor ; and a specimen of the mode of religious instruction at the Royal Military Asylum, Chelsea. By the Rev. Dr. Andrew Bell, F.As.S., F.R.S.Ed., Rector of Swanage, Dorset ; late Minister of St. Mary's, Madras ; Chaplain of Fort St. George ; and Director and Superintendent of the Male Asylum at Egmore. London, 1808 ; 8vo., pp. xvi. + 348.

An Analysis of the Experiment in education made at Egmore, near Madras, comprising a system alike fitted to reduce the expenses of tuition, abridge the labour of the master, and expedite the progress of the scholar ; and suggesting a scheme for the better administration of the poor laws by converting schools for the lower orders of youth into schools of industry. By the Rev. Dr. Andrew Bell, A.M., F.As.S., F.R.S.Ed., Rector of Swanage, Dorset ; late Minister of St. Mary's, Madras ; Chaplain of Fort St. George, and Director and Superintendent of the Male Asylum at Egmore. Third Edition. London, 1807 ; 8vo., pp. xii. + 115.

Elements of Tuition. Part II. The English school, or the history, analysis, and application of the Madras system of education in English schools. By the Rev. Andrew Bell, LL.D., F.As.S., F.R.S.Ed. A new edition greatly enlarged . . . London, 1814 ; 8vo., pp. xx. + 448.

Elements of Tuition. Part III. *Ludus Literarius*. The classical and grammar school, or the exposition of an experiment in education made at Madras in the years 1789-1796 with a view to its introduction into the schools for the higher orders of children, and with particular suggestions for its application to a Grammar school. By the Rev. Andrew Bell, D.D., LL.D. ;

F.As.S., F.R.S.Ed., Master of Sherburn Hospital, Durham.
 . . London, 1815 ; 8vo., pp. xxii. + 446.

My copies of the last three are bound in one volume with the following inscription :--"To Miss Southey [daughter and sister to Bell's biographers] with sentiments of the highest esteem and heart-felt gratitude from her faithfully devoted and humble servant Thos. Davies [Bell's Secretary], Keswick, 5 Oct. 1837."

The Origin, Nature, and Object of the New System of Education. [By Robert Southey.] London, 1812 ; 12mo., pp. 210.

This is a reprint of an article in Vol. VI. of the *Quarterly Review*. My copy is inscribed "By Southey. Presented to me by the Author, Keswick, 14 July, 1814."

A Guide to Masters and Mistresses who propose to conduct schools upon the plan of the late Rev. Dr. Bell. Extracted from the fifth edition of his "Instructions," printed 1816. London, 1838 ; 12mo., pp. x. + 75.

The Life of the Rev. Andrew Bell, D.D., LL.D., F.As.S., F.R.S.Ed., Prebendary of Westminster and Master of Sherburn Hospital, Durham ; comprising the rise and progress of the system of mutual tuition. The first volume by Robert Southey, Esq., P.L., LL.D., edited by Miss Southey. The two last by his son, the Rev. Charles Cuthbert Southey, B.A., of Queen's College, Oxford, Perpetual Curate of Setmurthy, and Assistant Curate and Evening Lecturer of Cockermouth. London, 1844 ; 8vo., Vol. I., pp. xx. + 531 ; Vol. II., pp. ix. + 693 ; Vol. III., pp. ix. + 736.

L'Enseignement Mutuel, ou Histoire de l'Introduction et de la Propagation de cette Méthode, par les soins du Docteur Bell, de J. Lancaster et d'autres. Description détaillée de son application dans les écoles élémentaires d'Angleterre et de France, ainsi que dans quelques autres institutions. Traduit de l'allemand de Joseph Hamel. Paris, 1818 ; 8vo., pp. xvi. + 228.

This work was published within a few days of the German original, *Der Gegenseitige Unterricht*.

The enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists considered. By Bishop Lavington. A new edition, with notes, introduction, and appendix by the Rev. R. Polwhele, Vicar of Manaccan and St. Anthony. London, 1833 ; 8vo., pp. cccxii. + 493.

Lavington's complete work appeared in 1754. Polwhele first reprinted it in 1820. In the 1833 edition the text is sandwiched between 312 pages of introduction and 93 pages of appendix, in which Polwhele discourses *de omnibus rebus*. Two of his pet aversions are Lancasterian schools and the British and Foreign Bible Society.

A Letter to a Member of Parliament, showing (in these days of infidelity and sedition) the serious and dangerous defects of the British and Foreign School and of Mr. Brougham's Bill (now pending) for the general education of the poor. By

Richard Lloyd, A.M., Rector of St. Dunstan in the West. London, 1821 ; 8vo., pp. 55.

Chrestomathia, being a collection of papers explanatory of the design of an institution proposed to be set on foot under the name of the Chrestomathic Day School or Chrestomathic School, for the extension of the new system of instruction to the higher branches of learning for the use of the middling and higher ranks in life. By Jeremy Bentham, Esq. London, 1816 ; 8vo., pp. xxi. + 347.

An Essay towards the Encouragement of Charity Schools, particularly those which are supported by Protestant Dissenters for teaching the children of the poor to read and work ; together with some apology for those schools which instruct them to write a plain hand and fit them for service or for the meaner trades and labours of life ; to which is prefixed an address to the supporters of these schools. By I. Watts. London, 1728 ; 8vo., pp. 51.

Life of William Allen, with Selections from his Correspondence. London, 1846 ; 8vo., Vol. I., pp. xi. + 468 ; Vol. II., pp. vii. + 458 ; Vol. III., pp. vii. + 456.

Memoir of the Life of Elizabeth Fry, with extracts from her Journal and Letters, edited by two of her daughters. London, 1847 ; 8vo., Vol. I., pp. xii. + 495 ; Vol. II., pp. viii. + 524.

Some Account of the Life and Writings of Mrs. Trimmer, with original letters, and meditations, and prayers, selected from her Journal, third edition. London, 1825 ; 8vo., pp. viii. + 564.

There probably never was another work in which so little information was spread over so many pages.

Life of Robert Owen, written by himself, with selections from his correspondence. London, 1857 ; 8vo., Vol. I., pp. xlv. + 390 ; Vol. II., pp. xxxviii. + 359.

An Account of the Progress of Joseph Lancaster's Plan for the Education of poor children and the training of masters for country schools. 8vo., pp. 7.

A tract without title-page or date, published possibly in, certainly not before, 1809.

Report of J. Lancaster's Progress from the year 1798, with the Report of the Finance Committee for the year 1810, to which is prefixed an address of the Committee for Promoting the Royal Lancasterian System for the Education of the Poor. London, 1811 ; 8vo., pp. viii. + 44.

Instructions for the forming and conducting of a Society for the education of the children of the labouring classes of the people according to the general principles of the Lancasterian or British plan. London, 1809 ; 8vo., pp. ix. + 24.

Reports of the Finance Committee and Trustees of the Royal Lancasterian Institution for the Education of the Poor, for the years 1811, 2. London, 1812, 3 : 8vo., pp. 64, 80.

Address of the Committee of the Institution for promoting the British System for the education of the labouring and manufacturing classes of society of every religious persuasion. Also a Report of the Finance Committee and Trustees to a General Meeting of Subscribers held at the Freemasons' Tavern on Wednesday, the 10th of November, 1813, His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent in the chair. London, 1813 ; 8vo., pp. 20.

Proceedings of the first public meeting of the West London Lancasterian Association for promoting the British System of Education. London, 1813 ; 8vo., pp. 19.

Bye-laws of the Committee of the institution for promoting the British system for the education of the labouring and manufacturing classes of society of every religious persuasion. London, 1813 ; 8vo., pp. 12.

My copy formerly belonged to Francis Place, and has his MS. annotations.

The *Philanthropist* or Repository for hints and suggestions calculated to promote the comfort and happiness of man. London, 1811-19 ; 7 vols.

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The *Guardian of Education*, a periodical work consisting of a practical essay on Christian education, founded immediately on the Scriptures and the sacred offices of the Church of England ; memoirs of modern philosophers and extracts from their writings, extracts from sermons and other books relating to religious education, and a copious examination of modern systems of education, children's books, and books for young persons. Conducted by Mrs. Trimmer. 5 vols, 8vo., 1802-6.

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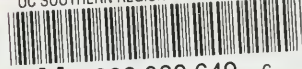
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